SILAS MARNER



Webster's Thesaurus Edition for PSAT®, SAT®, GRE®, LSAT®, GMAT®, and AP® English Test Preparation

George Eliot

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PREFACE FROM THE EDITOR

Designed for school districts, educators, and students seeking to maximize performance on standardized tests, Webster's paperbacks take advantage of the fact that classics are frequently assigned readings in English courses. By using a running thesaurus at the bottom of each page, this edition of *Silas Marner* by George Eliot was edited for students who are actively building their vocabularies in anticipation of taking PSAT®, SAT®, AP® (Advanced Placement®), GRE®, LSAT®, GMAT® or similar examinations.[1]

Webster's edition of this classic is organized to expose the reader to a maximum number of synonyms and antonyms for difficult and often ambiguous English words that are encountered in other works of literature, conversation, or academic examinations. Extremely rare or idiosyncratic words and expressions are given lower priority in the notes compared to words which are "difficult, and often encountered" in examinations. Rather than supply a single synonym, many are provided for a variety of meanings, allowing readers to better grasp the ambiguity of the English language, and avoid using the notes as a pure crutch. Having the reader decipher a word's meaning within context serves to improve vocabulary retention and understanding. Each page covers words not already highlighted on previous pages. If a difficult word is not noted on a page, chances are that it has been highlighted on a previous page. A more complete thesaurus is supplied at the end of the book; Synonyms and antonyms are extracted from Webster's Online Dictionary.

Definitions of remaining terms as well as translations can be found at www.websters-online-dictionary.org. Please send suggestions to websters@icongroupbooks.com

The Editor
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*"A **child**, more than all other **gifts***
*That **earth** can **offer** to **declining** man,*
*Brings **hope** with it, and **forward**-looking thoughts."*

–Wordsworth

Thesaurus

child: (*n*) baby, babe, bairn, infant, kid, toddler, tot, girl, brat, juvenile, minor. ANTONYMS: (*n*) ancestor, parent.
declining: (*adj*) deteriorating, decreasing, waning, falling, down, decadent, fading, lessening, diminishing, sloping; (*n*) decrease. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) thriving, burgeoning, growing.
earth: (*n*) world, dust, ground, land, lair, dry land, terra firma, clay, creation, ball, country.
forward-looking: (*adj*) forward, hopeful, positive.
gifts: (*n*) money, generosity, contributions, charity, caliber, aid, munificence, bounty. ANTONYM: (*n*) meanness.
hope: (*n, v*) trust, desire; (*n*) aspiration, faith, belief, expectation, confidence, expectancy, anticipation; (*v*) confide, anticipate. ANTONYMS: (*n*) reality, past, pessimism, distrust, independence.
offer: (*v*) give, bestow, put, tender, extend, impart, introduce, advance, propose; (*n*) proposal, proposition. ANTONYMS: (*v*) refuse, withhold, take.

PART ONE

CHAPTER I

In the days when the spinning-wheels hummed busily in the farmhouses--and even great ladies, **clothed** in silk and thread-lace, had their toy spinning-wheels of polished oak--there might be seen in districts far away among the lanes, or deep in the bosom of the hills, certain **pallid undersized** men, who, by the side of the **brawny** country-folk, looked like the remnants of a **disinherited** race. The shepherd's dog barked fiercely when one of these alien-looking men appeared on the upland, dark against the early winter sunset; for what dog likes a figure bent under a heavy bag?--and these pale men rarely stirred abroad without that mysterious burden. The shepherd himself, though he had good reason to believe that the bag held nothing but **flaxen** thread, or else the long rolls of strong linen **spun** from that thread, was not quite sure that this trade of weaving, indispensable though it was, could be carried on entirely without the help of the Evil One. In that far-off time superstition clung easily round every person or thing that was at all **unwonted**, or even intermittent and occasional merely, like the visits of the **pedlar** or the knife-grinder. No one knew where wandering men had their homes or their origin; and how was a man to be explained unless you at least knew somebody who knew his father and mother? To the peasants of old times, the world outside their own direct experience was a region of vagueness and mystery: to their untravelled thought a state of wandering was a conception as dim as the winter life of the swallows that came

Thesaurus

brawny: (*adj, n*) hefty, burly; (*adj*) strong, athletic, sturdy, strapping, beefy, powerful, robust, stalwart, mighty. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) skinny, puny, weak, frail, powerless, delicate, feeble.

clothed: (*adj*) dressed, wrapped, cloaked, robed, covered, attired, vested, absorbed, decent; (*v*) accustomed, arrayed. ANTONYM: (*adj*) unclothed.

disinherited: (*n*) disinheritance; (*adj*) homeless, unloved.

flaxen: (*adj*) flaxy, fair, blond, light, pale, golden, arenaceous, sandy, farinaceous; (*n*) blonde.

pallid: (*adj*) ghastly, wan, bloodless, lurid, cadaverous, sickly, ashen, white, pasty, livid, watery. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) healthy, rosy, vivid.

pedlar: (*n*) chapman, hawker, huckster, packman, cadger, seller, coster, costermonger, vender, vendor, street vendor.

spun: (*adj*) spined; (*v*) rotate, revolve.

undersized: (*adj*) little, undersize, short, diminutive, stunted, tiny, puny, dwarf, underweight, weak, underdeveloped. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) big, robust.

unwonted: (*adj*) unaccustomed, rare, unusual, unused, infrequent, uncustomary, singular, extraordinary, scarce, unaccountable, remarkable.

back with the spring; and even a **settler**, if he came from distant parts, hardly ever ceased to be viewed with a **remnant** of distrust, which would have prevented any surprise if a long course of **inoffensive** conduct on his part had ended in the commission of a crime; especially if he had any reputation for knowledge, or showed any skill in **handicraft**. All cleverness, whether in the rapid use of that difficult instrument the tongue, or in some other art unfamiliar to villagers, was in itself suspicious: honest folk, born and bred in a visible manner, were mostly not **overwise** or clever--at least, not beyond such a matter as knowing the signs of the weather; and the process by which rapidity and dexterity of any kind were acquired was so wholly hidden, that they partook of the nature of conjuring. In this way it came to pass that those scattered linen-weavers--emigrants from the town into the country--were to the last regarded as aliens by their rustic neighbours, and usually contracted the eccentric habits which belong to a state of loneliness.

In the early years of this century, such a linen-weaver, named Silas Marner, worked at his vocation in a stone cottage that stood among the nutty hedgerows near the village of Raveloe, and not far from the edge of a deserted stone-pit. The questionable sound of Silas's loom, so unlike the natural cheerful trotting of the winnowing-machine, or the simpler rhythm of the **flail**, had a half-fearful fascination for the Raveloe boys, who would often leave off their nutting or birds'-nesting to peep in at the window of the stone cottage, counterbalancing a certain awe at the mysterious action of the loom, by a pleasant sense of scornful superiority, drawn from the mockery of its alternating noises, along with the bent, tread-mill attitude of the weaver. But sometimes it happened that Marner, pausing to adjust an irregularity in his thread, became aware of the small scoundrels, and, though **chary** of his time, he liked their intrusion so ill that he would descend from his loom, and, opening the door, would fix on them a gaze that was always enough to make them take to their legs in terror. For how was it possible to believe that those large brown **protuberant** eyes in Silas Marner's pale face really saw nothing very distinctly that was not close to them, and not rather that their dreadful stare could dart cramp, or **rickets**, or a wry mouth at any boy who happened to be in the rear? They had, perhaps, heard their fathers and

Thesaurus

chary: (*adj*) careful, cagey, cagy, guarded, frugal, wary, reluctant, safe, stingy, watchful, illiberal. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) careless, rash, imprudent, reckless, heedless, trusting, forgetful, unwary, eager.

flail: (*n, v*) maul, flutter, wave; (*v*) thrash, flap, thresh, buffet, hit, beat up, hurt; (*n*) hammer.

handicraft: (*n*) craft, handcraft, handiwork, mystery, occupation, handwork, trade, art, profession, artifice, job.

inoffensive: (*adj, n*) harmless, innocent; (*adj*) innocuous, innoxious, safe, unoffending, euphemistic, hurtless, pleasant, gentle, tame. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) rude, unsavory, unpleasant, harmful, dysphemistic, malicious, exciting.

overwise: (*adj*) pretentious, pragmatical.

protuberant: (*adj, v*) prominent; (*adj*) bulging, bulgy, protruding, gibbous, projecting, protrusive, bellied, bellying, bulbous, conspicuous.

remnant: (*n*) end, relic, remains, residue, fragment, leftover, survival, trace, oddment, balance, stub.

rickets: (*n*) avitaminosis, hypovitaminosis.

settler: (*n*) migrant, colonist, immigrant, inhabitant, homesteader, squatter, planter, newcomer, colonizer, sockdolager, standish. ANTONYM: (*n*) native.

mothers hint that Silas Marner could cure folks' **rheumatism** if he had a mind, and add, still more darkly, that if you could only speak the devil fair enough, he might save you the cost of the doctor. Such strange lingering echoes of the old demon-worship might perhaps even now be caught by the diligent listener among the grey-haired **peasantry**; for the rude mind with difficulty associates the ideas of power and **benignity**. A shadowy conception of power that by much persuasion can be induced to refrain from inflicting harm, is the shape most easily taken by the sense of the Invisible in the minds of men who have always been pressed close by primitive wants, and to whom a life of hard toil has never been illuminated by any enthusiastic religious faith. To them pain and **mishap** present a far wider range of possibilities than **gladness** and enjoyment: their imagination is almost barren of the images that feed desire and hope, but is all overgrown by recollections that are a perpetual pasture to fear. "Is there anything you can fancy that you would like to eat?" I once said to an old **labouring** man, who was in his last illness, and who had refused all the food his wife had offered him. "No," he answered, "I've never been used to nothing but common **victual**, and I can't eat that." Experience had bred no **fancies** in him that could raise the **phantasm** of appetite.

And Raveloe was a village where many of the old echoes lingered, undrowned by new voices. Not that it was one of those barren parishes lying on the outskirts of civilization--inhabited by meagre sheep and thinly-scattered shepherds: on the contrary, it lay in the rich central plain of what we are pleased to call Merry England, and held farms which, speaking from a spiritual point of view, paid highly-desirable tithes. But it was **nestled** in a snug well-wooded hollow, quite an hour's journey on **horseback** from any **turnpike**, where it was never reached by the vibrations of the coach-horn, or of public opinion. It was an important-looking village, with a fine old church and large churchyard in the heart of it, and two or three large brick-and-stone homesteads, with well-walled orchards and ornamental weathercocks, standing close upon the road, and lifting more imposing fronts than the rectory, which peeped from among the trees on the other side of the churchyard:--a village which showed at once the summits of its social life, and told the practised eye that there was no great park and manor-

Thesaurus

benignity: (*n*) kindliness, benignancy, favor, graciousness, tenderness, friendliness, amiability, benefaction; (*adj, n*) kindness, humanity; (*adj*) beneficence.
fancies: (*n*) stock.
gladness: (*n*) joy, gaiety, pleasure, delight, bliss, glee, happiness, exhilaration, joyfulness, mirth, cheerfulness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) unhappiness, dismay, displeasure.
horseback: (*n*) hogback, body part.
labouring: (*adj*) drudging, work, working, busy, toiling.
mishap: (*n*) adversity, misfortune, casualty, mischance, misery, calamity, misadventure, disaster, ill, bad luck, catastrophe.
nestled: (*adj*) closer, close.
peasantry: (*n*) farmers.
phantasm: (*n*) apparition, ghost, illusion, phantom, spirit, vision, delusion, hallucination, eidolon, specter, fancy.
rheumatism: (*n*) arthritis, atrophic arthritis, juvenile rheumatoid arthritis; (*v*) lumbago, podagra, otalgia, neuralgia, earache, cephalalgia, odontalgia, sciatica.
turnpike: (*n*) superhighway, motorway, freeway, expressway, road, pike, highway, hayfork, pick, royal road, state highway.
victual: (*v*) provision, feed, supply, cater, furnish, purvey; (*n*) pabulum, edible, sustenance, victuals, eatable.

house in the vicinity, but that there were several chiefs in Raveloe who could farm badly quite at their ease, drawing enough money from their bad farming, in those war times, to live in a **rollicking** fashion, and keep a jolly Christmas, Whitsun, and Easter tide.

It was fifteen years since Silas Marner had first come to Raveloe; he was then simply a pallid young man, with prominent **short**-sighted brown eyes, whose appearance would have had nothing strange for people of average culture and experience, but for the villagers near whom he had come to settle it had mysterious peculiarities which corresponded with the exceptional nature of his occupation, and his advent from an unknown region called "North'ard". So had his way of life:--he invited no **comer** to step across his door-sill, and he never strolled into the village to drink a pint at the Rainbow, or to gossip at the wheelwright's: he sought no man or woman, save for the purposes of his calling, or in order to supply himself with **necessaries**; and it was soon clear to the Raveloe lasses that he would never urge one of them to accept him against her will--quite as if he had heard them declare that they would never marry a dead man come to life again. This view of Marner's personality was not without another ground than his pale face and **unexampled** eyes; for Jem Rodney, the mole-catcher, averred that one evening as he was returning **homeward**, he saw Silas Marner leaning against a **stile** with a heavy bag on his back, instead of resting the bag on the stile as a man in his senses would have done; and that, on coming up to him, he saw that Marner's eyes were set like a dead man's, and he spoke to him, and shook him, and his limbs were stiff, and his hands clutched the bag as if they'd been made of iron; but just as he had made up his mind that the **weaver** was dead, he came all right again, like, as you might say, in the **winking** of an eye, and said "Good-night", and walked off. All this Jem swore he had seen, more by token that it was the very day he had been mole-catching on Squire Cass's land, down by the old saw-pit. Some said Marner must have been in a "fit", a word which seemed to explain things otherwise incredible; but the **argumentative** Mr. Macey, clerk of the parish, shook his head, and asked if anybody was ever known to go off in a fit and not fall down. A fit was a stroke, wasn't it? and it was in the nature of a stroke to partly take away the use of a

Thesaurus

argumentative: (*adj*) quarrelsome, litigious, controversial, cantankerous, combative, forensic, hostile, polemic, disputative, contrary, ratiocinative. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) amiable, friendly, agreeable, conciliatory, passive, gentle.

comer: (*n*) newcomer, arriver, traveler, traveller, contender, competitor, competition, visitor, whiz kid, Young Turk; (*adj*) fresh.

homeward: (*adj*) oriented, orientated.

necessaries: (*n*) necessary, necessaries of life, necessity, must.

rollicking: (*adj*) mirthful, chirpy, frisky, jaunty, playful, hilarious, sportive, audacious, presumptuous, impudent, frolicky.

short-sighted: (*adj*) shortsighted, unwise, stupid, narrow-minded, crazy, ill-advised, half-baked, foolish, improvident.

stile: (*n*) bar, flight of stairs, upright, vertical, step, barrier, montant.

unexampled: (*adj*) new, unique, unparalleled, rare, novel, undescribed, peerless, inimitable, singular, fantastic, fresh.

weaver: (*n*) avadavat, Baya, ricebird, amadavat, oscine, weaver finch, tissue, texture, textile fabric, weaverbird, oscine bird.

winking: (*n*) twinkling, wink, blink, New York minute, jiffy, instant, nictation, nictitation, trice, blink of an eye; (*adj*) pink ribbons.

man's limbs and throw him on the parish, if he'd got no children to look to. No, no; it was no stroke that would let a man stand on his legs, like a horse between the shafts, and then walk off as soon as you can say "Gee!" But there might be such a thing as a man's soul being loose from his body, and going out and in, like a bird out of its nest and back; and that was how **folks** got over-wise, for they went to school in this shell-less state to those who could teach them more than their neighbours could learn with their five senses and the **parson**. And where did Master Marner get his knowledge of herbs from--and **charms** too, if he liked to give them away? Jem Rodney's story was no more than what might have been expected by anybody who had seen how Marner had **cured** Sally Oates, and made her sleep like a baby, when her heart had been beating enough to burst her body, for two months and more, while she had been under the doctor's care. He might cure more folks if he would; but he was worth speaking fair, if it was only to keep him from doing you a mischief.

It was partly to this vague fear that Marner was **indebted** for protecting him from the **persecution** that his singularities might have drawn upon him, but still more to the fact that, the old linen-weaver in the neighbouring parish of Tarley being dead, his handicraft made him a highly welcome settler to the richer housewives of the district, and even to the more **provident** cottagers, who had their little stock of yarn at the year's end. Their sense of his **usefulness** would have counteracted any **repugnance** or suspicion which was not confirmed by a deficiency in the quality or the tale of the cloth he wove for them. And the years had rolled on without producing any change in the impressions of the neighbours concerning Marner, except the change from novelty to habit. At the end of fifteen years the Raveloe men said just the same things about Silas Marner as at the beginning: they did not say them quite so often, but they believed them much more strongly when they did say them. There was only one important addition which the years had brought: it was, that Master Marner had laid by a fine sight of money somewhere, and that he could buy up "bigger men" than himself.

Thesaurus

charms: (*n*) trinkets, jewelry, jewels.
cured: (*adj*) recovered, corned, aged, mellow, whole, better, pickle cured, salted, vulcanised, well, vulcanized.
folks: (*n*) people, folk, tribe, relations, household, house, relatives, relative, kindred, lineage, kin.
indebted: (*adj*) grateful, appreciative, thankful, obliged, liable, insolvent, broke; (*prep*) beholden, debted; (*n*) debtor; (*v*) owe. ANTONYM: (*adj*) ungrateful.
parson: (*n*) cleric, clergyman, rector, pastor, curate, preacher, ecclesiastic, divine, priest, vicar, father.
persecution: (*adj, n*) annoyance; (*n*) harassment, torture, maltreatment, subjugation, hurt, nuisance, cruelty; (*adj*) molestation, intolerance, abuse.
provident: (*adj*) prudent, frugal, sparing, economical, farsighted, cautious, careful, parsimonious, sagacious, wise; (*v*) precautionary. ANTONYM: (*adj*) foolish.
repugnance: (*n*) horror, hatred, antipathy, inconsistency, repulsion, nausea, revulsion, loathing, detestation, aversion, hate. ANTONYMS: (*n*) pleasantness, love, attractiveness, adoration, liking.
usefulness: (*n*) utility, service, benefit, convenience, practicality, avail, helpfulness, effectiveness, efficacy, value; (*adj, n*) worth. ANTONYMS: (*n*) inefficiency, inutility, clumsiness, insignificance.

But while opinion concerning him had remained nearly stationary, and his daily habits had presented scarcely any visible change, Marner's inward life had been a history and a **metamorphosis**, as that of every **fervid** nature must be when it has fled, or been condemned, to solitude. His life, before he came to Raveloe, had been filled with the movement, the mental activity, and the close fellowship, which, in that day as in this, marked the life of an **artisan** early incorporated in a narrow religious sect, where the **poorest layman** has the chance of distinguishing himself by gifts of speech, and has, at the very least, the weight of a silent voter in the government of his community. Marner was highly thought of in that little hidden world, known to itself as the church **assembling** in Lantern Yard; he was believed to be a young man of exemplary life and ardent faith; and a peculiar interest had been centred in him ever since he had fallen, at a prayer-meeting, into a mysterious rigidity and suspension of consciousness, which, lasting for an hour or more, had been mistaken for death. To have sought a medical explanation for this phenomenon would have been held by Silas himself, as well as by his minister and fellow-members, a wilful self-exclusion from the spiritual significance that might lie **therein**. Silas was evidently a brother selected for a peculiar discipline; and though the effort to interpret this discipline was discouraged by the absence, on his part, of any spiritual vision during his outward trance, yet it was believed by himself and others that its effect was seen in an accession of light and fervour. A less truthful man than he might have been tempted into the subsequent creation of a vision in the form of **resurgent** memory; a less sane man might have believed in such a creation; but Silas was both sane and honest, though, as with many honest and **fervent** men, culture had not defined any channels for his sense of mystery, and so it spread itself over the proper pathway of inquiry and knowledge. He had inherited from his mother some acquaintance with medicinal herbs and their preparation--a little store of wisdom which she had imparted to him as a solemn bequest--but of late years he had had doubts about the **lawfulness** of applying this knowledge, believing that herbs could have no efficacy without prayer, and that prayer might suffice without herbs; so that the inherited delight he had in wandering in

Thesaurus

artisan: (*n*) craftsman, artist, operative, machinist, journeyman, worker, workman, Wright, carpenter, tradesman; (*adj*) mechanic.
assembling: (*n*) assemblage, assembly, collection, collecting, compilation, meeting, aggregation, congregation, montage; (*adj*) gathering, assembled.
fervent: (*adj*) ardent, eager, earnest, enthusiastic, intense, cordial, passionate, hot, emotional, torrid, strong. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) apathetic, unenthusiastic, cool, weak, unexcited, dispirited, dispassionate, flippant, impassive, lukewarm, mild.
fervid: (*adj*) ardent, burning, hot, vehement, eager, passionate, impassioned, fiery, enthusiastic; (*adj, v*) warm, glowing.
lawfulness: (*n*) legitimacy, validity, legitimateness, genuineness, right, allowableness.
layman: (*n*) commoner, layperson, laic, laymen, laity, lay person, outsider, common man, civilian, lay reader, common person. ANTONYM: (*n*) clergyman.
metamorphosis: (*n*) alteration, change, conversion, transformation, metamorphism, translation, transmutation, transfiguration, revision, modification, transmogrification.
poorest: (*adj*) lowest, least, worst.
resurgent: (*adj*) dynamical, dynamic.
therein: (*adv*) in this, in there.

the fields in search of **foxglove** and **dandelion** and **coltsfoot**, began to wear to him the character of a temptation.

Among the members of his church there was one young man, a little older than himself, with whom he had long lived in such close friendship that it was the custom of their Lantern Yard brethren to call them David and Jonathan. The real name of the friend was William Dane, and he, too, was regarded as a shining instance of youthful piety, though somewhat given to over-severity towards weaker brethren, and to be so **dazzled** by his own light as to hold himself wiser than his teachers. But whatever blemishes others might discern in William, to his friend's mind he was faultless; for Marner had one of those **impressible** self-doubting natures which, at an inexperienced age, admire **imperativeness** and lean on contradiction. The expression of trusting simplicity in Marner's face, heightened by that absence of special observation, that defenceless, deer-like gaze which belongs to large prominent eyes, was strongly contrasted by the self-complacent suppression of inward triumph that lurked in the narrow slanting eyes and compressed lips of William Dane. One of the most frequent topics of conversation between the two friends was Assurance of salvation: Silas confessed that he could never arrive at anything higher than hope mingled with fear, and listened with longing wonder when William declared that he had possessed **unshaken** assurance ever since, in the period of his conversion, he had dreamed that he saw the words "calling and election sure" standing by themselves on a white page in the open Bible. Such colloquies have occupied many a pair of pale-faced weavers, whose **unnurtured** souls have been like young winged things, fluttering **forsaken** in the twilight.

It had seemed to the unsuspecting Silas that the friendship had suffered no chill even from his formation of another attachment of a closer kind. For some months he had been engaged to a young servant-woman, waiting only for a little increase to their mutual savings in order to their marriage; and it was a great delight to him that Sarah did not object to William's occasional presence in their Sunday interviews. It was at this point in their history that Silas's **cataleptic** fit occurred during the prayer-meeting; and amidst the various queries and

Thesaurus

cataleptic: (*adj*) out cold, comatose, insensible.
coltsfoot: (*n*) Tussilago farfara, herb, galax, beetleweed.
dandelion: (*n*) herb, taraxacum, family Compositae, family Asteraceae, daisy, compositae, common dandelion, aster family, Asteraceae.
dazzled: (*adj*) confused, dazzle, bewildered, blind, blinder, fascinated, unsighted.
forsaken: (*adj*) deserted, abandoned, lonely, forlorn, derelict, desert, empty, solitary, friendless; (*adj, v*) jilted; (*v*) crossed in love. ANTONYM: (*adj*) unforsaken.
foxglove: (*n*) digitalis, fingerroot, herb, fairy bell, fingerflower, digitalis glycoside, common foxglove, digitalin.
imperativeness: (*n*) instancy, exigency, urgency, closet, crush, insistency, immediateness, force per unit area, fourth estate, immediacy, press.
impressible: (*adj*) impressionable, sensitive, soft, delicate, sensible, adhesive, easily affected, fine, gentle, courteous, easy.
unnurtured: (*adj*) unfledged, untaught, uneducated, uncultivated, unlicked.
unshaken: (*adj*) steady, firm, constant, undismayed, undaunted, unallayed, unworn, unwavering, unmoved, steadfast, calm.

expressions of interest addressed to him by his fellow-members, William's suggestion alone jarred with the general sympathy towards a brother thus singled out for special dealings. He observed that, to him, this trance looked more like a **visitation** of Satan than a proof of divine favour, and exhorted his friend to see that he hid no **accursed** thing within his soul. Silas, feeling bound to accept rebuke and **admonition** as a **brotherly** office, felt no resentment, but only pain, at his friend's doubts concerning him; and to this was soon added some anxiety at the perception that Sarah's manner towards him began to exhibit a strange **fluctuation** between an effort at an increased manifestation of regard and involuntary signs of shrinking and dislike. He asked her if she wished to break off their engagement; but she denied this: their engagement was known to the church, and had been recognized in the prayer-meetings; it could not be broken off without strict investigation, and Sarah could render no reason that would be sanctioned by the feeling of the community. At this time the senior deacon was taken dangerously ill, and, being a childless **widower**, he was tended night and day by some of the younger **brethren** or sisters. Silas frequently took his turn in the night-watching with William, the one **relieving** the other at two in the morning. The old man, contrary to expectation, seemed to be on the way to recovery, when one night Silas, sitting up by his bedside, observed that his usual audible breathing had **ceased**. The candle was burning low, and he had to lift it to see the patient's face distinctly. Examination convinced him that the deacon was dead--had been dead some time, for the limbs were rigid. Silas asked himself if he had been asleep, and looked at the clock: it was already four in the morning. How was it that William had not come? In much anxiety he went to seek for help, and soon there were several friends assembled in the house, the minister among them, while Silas went away to his work, wishing he could have met William to know the reason of his non-appearance. But at six o'clock, as he was thinking of going to seek his friend, William came, and with him the minister. They came to summon him to Lantern Yard, to meet the church members there; and to his inquiry concerning the cause of the summons the only reply was, "You will hear." Nothing further was said until Silas was **seated** in the vestry, in front of the minister, with the eyes of those who to him represented

Thesaurus

accursed: (*adj*) execrable, abominable, detestable, accurst, hateful, damned, damnable, maledict, blasted; (*v*) atrocious, stranded.
admonition: (*n*) advice, caution, admonishment, reproof, exhortation, lesson, counsel, monition, caveat, censure, rebuke. ANTONYM: (*n*) approval.
brethren: (*n*) congregation, assembly, brother, people, laity, family, flock, fold.
brotherly: (*adj*) brotherlike, sympathetic, cordial, neighborly, harmonious, amicable, affectionate, sisterly, fatherly; (*adv*) sympathetically, fraternally. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) sisterly, uncompassionate, unfriendly, unneighborly, sororal, antagonistic, uncompanionable.
ceased: (*adj*) finished.
fluctuation: (*n*) vicissitude, wavering, deviation, wobble, swing, undulation, variance, oscillation, hesitation, vibration, modification. ANTONYM: (*n*) resolution.
relieving: (*adj*) pertinent, comforting, applicable; (*n*) encouragement.
seated: (*adj*) sat, sedentary.
visitation: (*v*) visit, examination; (*n*) tribulation, calamity, annoyance, misfortune, irritation, infliction, inspection, test, ordeal.
widower: (*n*) adult male, widowman, man.

God's people fixed **solemnly** upon him. Then the minister, taking out a pocket-knife, showed it to Silas, and asked him if he knew where he had left that knife? Silas said, he did not know that he had left it anywhere out of his own pocket--but he was trembling at this strange **interrogation**. He was then exhorted not to hide his sin, but to confess and **repent**. The knife had been found in the bureau by the departed deacon's bedside-- found in the place where the little bag of church money had **lain**, which the minister himself had seen the day before. Some hand had removed that bag; and whose hand could it be, if not that of the man to whom the knife belonged? For some time Silas was **mute** with astonishment: then he said, "God will clear me: I know nothing about the knife being there, or the money being gone. Search me and my dwelling; you will find nothing but three pound five of my own savings, which William Dane knows I have had these six months." At this William groaned, but the minister said, "The proof is heavy against you, brother Marner. The money was taken in the night last past, and no man was with our departed brother but you, for William Dane declares to us that he was **hindered** by sudden sickness from going to take his place as usual, and you yourself said that he had not come; and, moreover, you neglected the dead body."

"I must have slept," said Silas. Then, after a pause, he added, "Or I must have had another visitation like that which you have all seen me under, so that the thief must have come and gone while I was not in the body, but out of the body. But, I say again, search me and my dwelling, for I have been nowhere else."

The search was made, and it ended--in William Dane's finding the well-known bag, empty, tucked behind the chest of drawers in Silas's chamber! On this William exhorted his friend to confess, and not to hide his sin any longer. Silas turned a look of keen **reproach** on him, and said, "William, for nine years that we have gone in and out together, have you ever known me tell a lie? But God will clear me."

"Brother," said William, "how do I know what you may have done in the secret **chambers** of your heart, to give Satan an advantage over you?"

Thesaurus

chambers: (*n*) bureau, consulting room, countinghouse, apartment, lodging, suite.
hindered: (*adj*) obstructed, blocked, delayed, stalled, slowed down, slow, in an inferior position, in a weak position, impedite, thwarted, frustrated.
interrogation: (*n*) inquiry, question, query, doubt, enquiry, hearing, quiz, problem, demand, interview, interrogative.
lain: (*adj*) artless, unsophisticated, unaffected, naive, untutored, simple, pure, natural, native, inartificial.
mute: (*adj*) dumb, silent, inarticulate, dummy, tongueless; (*v*) muffle, dampen, deaden, hush; (*adj, v*) quiet, dull. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) talkative, speaking, spoken; (*v*) amplify.
repent: (*v*) deplore, bewail, rue, mourn, lament, atone, sorry, bemoan, feel remorse, grieve, be sorry.
reproach: (*n, v*) blame, rebuke, charge, abuse, disgrace, reprimand, invective; (*v*) accuse, chide, condemn; (*n*) condemnation. ANTONYMS: (*n, v*) praise; (*v*) commend, approve; (*n*) compliment, commendation, approval.
solemnly: (*adv*) earnestly, gravely, majestically, stately, sternly, staidly, thoughtfully, soberly, formally, ceremoniously, importantly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) cheerfully, flippantly.

Silas was still looking at his friend. Suddenly a deep flush came over his face, and he was about to speak **impetuously**, when he seemed checked again by some inward shock, that sent the flush back and made him tremble. But at last he spoke **feebly**, looking at William.

"I remember now--the knife wasn't in my pocket."

William said, "I know nothing of what you mean." The other persons present, however, began to inquire where Silas meant to say that the knife was, but he would give no further explanation: he only said, "I am sore stricken; I can say nothing. God will clear me."

On their return to the vestry there was further deliberation. Any resort to legal measures for ascertaining the culprit was contrary to the principles of the church in Lantern Yard, **according** to which prosecution was forbidden to Christians, even had the case held less scandal to the community. But the members were bound to take other measures for finding out the truth, and they resolved on praying and drawing lots. This resolution can be a ground of surprise only to those who are **unacquainted** with that obscure religious life which has gone on in the alleys of our towns. Silas knelt with his brethren, relying on his own innocence being certified by immediate divine interference, but feeling that there was sorrow and mourning behind for him even then--that his trust in man had been cruelly bruised. *The lots declared that Silas Marner was guilty.* He was solemnly suspended from church-membership, and called upon to render up the stolen money: only on confession, as the sign of repentance, could he be received once more within the **folds** of the church. Marner listened in silence. At last, when everyone rose to depart, he went towards William Dane and said, in a voice shaken by agitation--

"The last time I remember using my knife, was when I took it out to cut a strap for you. I don't remember putting it in my pocket again. *You* stole the money, and you have woven a plot to lay the sin at my door. But you may prosper, for all that: there is no just God that governs the earth **righteously**, but a God of lies, that bears witness against the innocent."

There was a general shudder at this blasphemy.

Thesaurus

according: (*adj*) pursuant, consonant, equal, agreeable, harmonious, conformable, consistent, corresponding, respondent; (*adv*) correspondingly, accordingly.

feebly: (*adv*) faintly, unenthusiastically, dimly, hopelessly, unproductively, unpersuasively, unconvincingly, uncertainly, reluctantly, powerlessly, insipidly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) robustly, confidently, domineeringly, vehemently, stubbornly, strongly, effectively, convincingly, competently, admirably, wholeheartedly.

folds: (*n*) laps.

impetuously: (*adv*) rashly, impulsively, vehemently, precipitately, fiercely, headily, passionately, intensely, fierily, spontaneously, thoughtlessly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) deliberately, sensibly, patiently.

righteously: (*adv*) uprightly, justly, honestly, right, rightly, correctly, morally, rightfully, properly, truly, rightwisely . ANTONYMS: (*adv*) improperly, sinfully.

unacquainted: (*adj*) unaware, unaccustomed, strange, oblivious, ignorant, unapprized, unapprised, unweeting, inexperienced, innocent, not learned. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) accustomed, knowledgeable, conscious, informed.

William said **meekly**, "I leave our brethren to judge whether this is the voice of Satan or not. I can do nothing but pray for you, Silas."

Poor Marner went out with that despair in his soul--that shaken trust in God and man, which is little short of madness to a loving nature. In the bitterness of his wounded spirit, he said to himself, "*She* will cast me off too." And he reflected that, if she did not believe the testimony against him, her whole faith must be upset as his was. To people accustomed to reason about the forms in which their religious feeling has incorporated itself, it is difficult to enter into that simple, **untaught** state of mind in which the form and the feeling have never been **severed** by an act of reflection. We are apt to think it inevitable that a man in Marner's position should have **begun** to question the validity of an appeal to the divine judgment by drawing lots; but to him this would have been an effort of independent thought such as he had never known; and he must have made the effort at a moment when all his energies were turned into the anguish of disappointed faith. If there is an angel who records the sorrows of men as well as their sins, he knows how many and deep are the sorrows that spring from false ideas for which no man is culpable.

Marner went home, and for a whole day sat alone, stunned by despair, without any impulse to go to Sarah and attempt to win her belief in his innocence. The second day he took refuge from **benumbing unbelief**, by getting into his **loom** and working away as usual; and before many hours were past, the minister and one of the deacons came to him with the message from Sarah, that she held her engagement to him at an end. Silas received the message **mutely**, and then turned away from the messengers to work at his loom again. In little more than a month from that time, Sarah was married to William Dane; and not long afterwards it was known to the brethren in Lantern Yard that Silas Marner had **departed** from the town.

Thesaurus

begun: (*adj*) present.
benumbing: (*adj*) benumbed.
departed: (*adj*) dead, bygone, late, former, bypast, defunct, past, left; (*adj, v*) gone, extinct; (*n*) decedent. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) remaining, alive.
loom: (*v*) appear, threaten, emerge, impend, overshadow, rise, menace, bulk large, hulk, hover; (*adj, v*) lower. ANTONYMS: (*v*) recede, retreat.
meekly: (*adv*) humbly, submissively, tamely, compliantly, obediently, docilely, peacefully, lowly, modestly, placidly, kindly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) haughtily, harshly, wildly, arrogantly, assertively, brashly.
mutely: (*adv*) dumbly, wordlessly, stilly, speechlessly, taciturnly, unspokenly, quietly, noiselessly, dully, soundlessly, dummily. ANTONYM: (*adv*) noisily.
severed: (*adj*) cut off, cut, broken, separate, Severn, disconnected, rent off, disrupt, disengaged, torn, disrupted.
unbelief: (*n*) atheism, incredulity, skepticism, distrust, scepticism, misbelief, agnosticism, doubt, heresy, suspicion, misgiving. ANTONYM: (*n*) faith.
untaught: (*adj*) illiterate, ignorant, unschooled, uninformed, untutored, uninstructed, uncultivated, unlicked, unnurtured, unhatched, unfledged. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) trained, educated, literate, economical.

CHAPTER II

Even people whose lives have been made various by learning, sometimes find it hard to keep a fast hold on their **habitual** views of life, on their faith in the Invisible, nay, on the sense that their past joys and sorrows are a real experience, when they are suddenly transported to a new land, where the beings around them know nothing of their history, and share none of their ideas-- where their mother earth shows another lap, and human life has other forms than those on which their souls have been **nourished**. Minds that have been **unhinged** from their old faith and love, have perhaps sought this Lethean influence of exile, in which the past **becomes dreamy** because its symbols have all vanished, and the present too is dreamy because it is linked with no memories. But even their experience may hardly enable them thoroughly to imagine what was the effect on a simple weaver like Silas Marner, when he left his own country and people and came to settle in Raveloe. Nothing could be more unlike his native town, set within sight of the widespread hillsides, than this low, wooded region, where he felt hidden even from the heavens by the screening trees and hedgerows. There was nothing here, when he rose in the deep morning quiet and looked out on the **dewy** brambles and rank **tufted** grass, that seemed to have any relation with that life **centring** in Lantern Yard, which had once been to him the altar-place of high dispensations. The **whitewashed** walls; the little pews where well-known figures entered with a subdued **rustling**, and where first one well-known voice

Thesaurus

becomes: (*v*) become.
centring: (*n*) centering, centres.
dewy: (*adj*) wet, dank, bedewed, humid, moist, damp, fresh, new, roric, undried, rorid.
dreamy: (*adj*) faraway, romantic, impractical, somnolent, visionary, sleepy, pensive, moony, idealistic, drowsy; (*v*) balmy. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) cynical, vigorous, pragmatic, practical, awake, alert, ordinary, prosaic.

habitual: (*adj, n*) common, frequent, usual; (*adj*) chronic, conventional, confirmed, accustomed, natural, commonplace, everyday, ordinary. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) occasional, infrequent, mild, irregular, exceptional, erratic, abnormal, innovative.
nourished: (*adj*) fostered.
rustling: (*n*) rustle, whispering, whisper, larceny; (*adj*) murmurous, susurrous, active, soughing.

tufted: (*adj*) hairy, cespitose, caespitose, topknotted, plumed, hirsute, rough, decorated, filamentous, fimbriated, bushy.
unhinged: (*adj*) crazy, mad, demented, disturbed, sick, distracted, brainsick, all possessed, meshugge; (*v*) frustrated, crossed. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) sane, steady, stable.
whitewashed: (*adj*) overpowered, overcome, crushed, conquered, beaten, routed, painted.

and then another, pitched in a peculiar key of petition, uttered phrases at once **occult** and familiar, like the **amulet** worn on the heart; the pulpit where the minister delivered **unquestioned** doctrine, and swayed to and fro, and handled the book in a long accustomed manner; the very pauses between the couplets of the hymn, as it was given out, and the recurrent swell of voices in song: these things had been the channel of divine influences to Marner--they were the fostering home of his religious emotions--they were Christianity and God's kingdom upon earth. A weaver who finds hard words in his hymn-book knows nothing of abstractions; as the little child knows nothing of parental love, but only knows one face and one lap towards which it **stretches** its arms for refuge and nurture.

And what could be more unlike that Lantern Yard world than the world in Raveloe?--orchards looking lazy with neglected plenty; the large church in the wide churchyard, which men gazed at lounging at their own doors in service-time; the purple-faced farmers **jogging** along the lanes or turning in at the Rainbow; homesteads, where men supped heavily and slept in the light of the evening hearth, and where women seemed to be laying up a stock of linen for the life to come. There were no lips in Raveloe from which a word could fall that would stir Silas Marner's **benumbed** faith to a sense of pain. In the early ages of the world, we know, it was believed that each territory was inhabited and ruled by its own divinities, so that a man could cross the bordering heights and be out of the reach of his native gods, whose presence was confined to the streams and the groves and the hills among which he had lived from his birth. And poor Silas was vaguely conscious of something not unlike the feeling of primitive men, when they fled thus, in fear or in **sullenness**, from the face of an **unpropitious** deity. It seemed to him that the Power he had **vainly** trusted in among the streets and at the prayer-meetings, was very far away from this land in which he had taken refuge, where men lived in careless abundance, knowing and needing nothing of that trust, which, for him, had been turned to bitterness. The little light he possessed spread its beams so narrowly, that frustrated belief was a curtain broad enough to create for him the blackness of night.

Thesaurus

amulet: (*n*) talisman, fetish, mascot, periapt, charm, telesm, philter, spell, phylactery, keepsake, good luck charm.
benumbed: (*adj*) torpid, asleep, stiff, insensible, dull, dead, numbed, hardened, drugged, uninterested, cold.
jogging: (*n*) run, fast motion, joggling, impulse tachometer, exercising, exercise, inching.
occult: (*adj*) hidden, obscure, mysterious, cryptic, cryptical, dark, esoteric, magical, unseen, confidential; (*adj, n, v*) secret.
stretches: (*adj*) stretched.
sullenness: (*n*) glumness, moroseness, moodiness, resentment, sourness, gloominess, brusqueness, sulk, gloom, doggedness, mumps. ANTONYM: (*n*) cheeriness.
unpropitious: (*adj*) inauspicious, adverse, unlucky, unfavorable, inopportune, evil, sinister, disastrous, infelicitous; (*adj, v*) cross, hostile.
unquestioned: (*adj*) undisputed, unquestionable, unanimous, clear-cut, accepted, axiomatic, proverbial; (*adj, v*) unchallenged; (*v*) uncontested, uncontradicted.
vainly: (*adv*) uselessly, futilely, fruitlessly, conceitedly, in vain, worthlessly, abortively, bootlessly, arrogantly, unproductively; (*adj, adv*) foolishly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) fruitfully, successfully, effectively.

His first movement after the shock had been to work in his loom; and he went on with this **unremittingly**, never asking himself why, now he was come to Raveloe, he worked far on into the night to finish the tale of Mrs. Osgood's table-linen sooner than she expected-- without contemplating beforehand the money she would put into his hand for the work. He seemed to weave, like the spider, from pure impulse, without reflection. Every man's work, pursued steadily, tends in this way to become an end in itself, and so to bridge over the **loveless** chasms of his life. Silas's hand satisfied itself with throwing the shuttle, and his eye with seeing the little **squares** in the cloth complete themselves under his effort. Then there were the calls of hunger; and Silas, in his solitude, had to provide his own breakfast, dinner, and supper, to fetch his own water from the well, and put his own kettle on the fire; and all these immediate promptings helped, along with the weaving, to reduce his life to the **unquestioning** activity of a spinning insect. He hated the thought of the past; there was nothing that called out his love and fellowship toward the strangers he had come amongst; and the future was all dark, for there was no Unseen Love that cared for him. Thought was arrested by utter bewilderment, now its old narrow pathway was closed, and affection seemed to have died under the **bruise** that had fallen on its keenest nerves.

But at last Mrs. Osgood's table-linen was finished, and Silas was paid in gold. His earnings in his native town, where he worked for a wholesale dealer, had been after a lower rate; he had been paid weekly, and of his weekly earnings a large proportion had gone to objects of **piety** and charity. Now, for the first time in his life, he had five bright guineas put into his hand; no man expected a share of them, and he loved no man that he should offer him a share. But what were the guineas to him who saw no **vista** beyond countless days of weaving? It was needless for him to ask that, for it was pleasant to him to feel them in his palm, and look at their bright faces, which were all his own: it was another element of life, like the weaving and the satisfaction of hunger, **subsisting** quite **aloof** from the life of belief and love from which he had been cut off. The weaver's hand had known the touch of **hard**-won money even before the palm had grown to its full breadth; for twenty years, mysterious money had stood to him as the symbol of

Thesaurus

aloof: (*adj*) distant, reserved, cool, standoffish, unconcerned, indifferent, unfriendly, frigid, arrogant, cold; (*adv*) afar. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) friendly, involved, approachable, sociable, outgoing, open, enthusiastic, relaxed, communicative, affable, respectful.

bruise: (*n, v*) hurt, wound; (*v*) crush, pound, mash, contuse, grind, bray; (*n*) contusion, hematoma; (*adj, n*) buffet.

hard-**won**: (*adj*) difficult.

loveless: (*adj*) unloving, unloved.

piety: (*n*) godliness, devoutness, faith, righteousness, holiness, reverence, religion, religiousness, piousness, sanctity, goodness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) sin, profanity, wickedness.

squares: (*n*) square.

subsisting: (*adj*) extant, living.

unquestioning: (*adj*) credulous, sure, strong, positive, questionless, safe, wholehearted, secure, tacitly comprised, unfaltering, steady.

unremittingly: (*adv*) constantly, incessantly, unendingly, continuously, ceaselessly, unceasingly, endlessly, unfailingly, unrelentingly, insistently, persistently. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) inconsistently, sporadically.

vista: (*n*) outlook, panorama, horizon, aspect, scene, landscape, scenery, picture, alley; (*adj, n*) view, perspective.

earthly good, and the immediate object of **toil**. He had seemed to love it little in the years when every penny had its purpose for him; for he loved the *purpose* then. But now, when all purpose was gone, that habit of looking towards the money and grasping it with a sense of fulfilled effort made a **loam** that was deep enough for the seeds of desire; and as Silas walked homeward across the fields in the twilight, he drew out the money and thought it was brighter in the gathering gloom.

About this time an incident happened which seemed to open a possibility of some fellowship with his neighbours. One day, taking a pair of shoes to be mended, he saw the cobbler's wife seated by the fire, suffering from the terrible **symptoms** of heart-disease and **dropsy**, which he had witnessed as the precursors of his mother's death. He felt a rush of pity at the **mingled** sight and **remembrance**, and, **recalling** the relief his mother had found from a simple preparation of foxglove, he promised Sally Oates to bring her something that would ease her, since the doctor did her no good. In this office of charity, Silas felt, for the first time since he had come to Raveloe, a sense of unity between his past and present life, which might have been the beginning of his rescue from the insect-like existence into which his nature had **shrunk**. But Sally Oates's disease had raised her into a **personage** of much interest and importance among the neighbours, and the fact of her having found relief from drinking Silas Marner's "stuff" became a matter of general discourse. When Doctor Kimble gave **physic**, it was natural that it should have an effect; but when a weaver, who came from nobody knew where, worked wonders with a bottle of brown waters, the occult character of the process was evident. Such a sort of thing had not been known since the Wise Woman at Tarley died; and she had charms as well as "stuff": everybody went to her when their children had fits. Silas Marner must be a person of the same sort, for how did he know what would bring back Sally Oates's breath, if he didn't know a fine sight more than that? The Wise Woman had words that she muttered to herself, so that you couldn't hear what they were, and if she tied a bit of red thread round the child's toe the while, it would keep off the water in the head. There were women in Raveloe, at that present time, who had worn one of the Wise Woman's little bags round their necks, and,

Thesaurus

dropsy: (*n*) oedema, hydrops, edema, chemosis, tumefaction, puffiness, intumescence, tumor, lump, swelling, circulatory failure.
loam: (*n*) dirt, soil, earth, land, marl, glebe, ground, subsoil, mold, chalk, clot.
mingled: (*adj*) miscellaneous, complex, indiscriminate, heterogeneous, medley, confused, eclectic, motley, different; (*v*) blended, blent.
personage: (*n*) person, notable, celebrity, personality, individual, bigwig, figure, somebody, human, character, being.
physic: (*n*) medicine, aperient, cathartic, medication, healing, medicament, drug; (*n, v*) cure, doctor, remedy; (*v*) heal.
recalling: (*adj*) revocatory; (*n*) recognition.
remembrance: (*n, v*) recollection, mind; (*n*) commemoration, memorial, recall, relic, monument, keepsake, reminiscence, recognition; (*adj, n*) memento.
shrunk: (*adj*) contracted, wizened, withered, shrivelled, shriveled, wizen, insipid, drawn grain, wearish.
symptoms: (*n*) syndrome.
toil: (*n, v*) labor, work, drudge, sweat, drudgery, grind, labour, travail; (*v*) plod; (*n*) effort, exertion.
ANTONYMS: (*n*) pastime, entertainment, fun, relaxation; (*v*) laze, neglect.

in consequence, had never had an idiot child, as Ann Coulter had. Silas Marner could very likely do as much, and more; and now it was all clear how he should have come from unknown parts, and be so "comical-looking". But Sally Oates must mind and not tell the doctor, for he would be sure to set his face against Marner: he was always angry about the Wise Woman, and used to threaten those who went to her that they should have none of his help any more.

Silas now found himself and his cottage suddenly **beset** by mothers who wanted him to charm away the whooping-cough, or bring back the milk, and by men who wanted stuff against the rheumatics or the knots in the hands; and, to secure themselves against a refusal, the applicants brought silver in their palms. Silas might have driven a profitable trade in charms as well as in his small list of drugs; but money on this condition was no temptation to him: he had never known an impulse towards **falsity**, and he drove one after another away with growing irritation, for the news of him as a wise man had spread even to Tarley, and it was long before people ceased to take long walks for the sake of asking his aid. But the hope in his wisdom was at length changed into dread, for no one believed him when he said he knew no charms and could work no cures, and every man and woman who had an accident or a new attack after applying to him, set the misfortune down to Master Marner's **ill**-will and irritated glances. Thus it came to pass that his movement of pity towards Sally Oates, which had given him a transient sense of brotherhood, **heightened** the **repulsion** between him and his neighbours, and made his isolation more complete.

Gradually the guineas, the crowns, and the half-crowns grew to a heap, and Marner drew less and less for his own wants, trying to solve the problem of keeping himself strong enough to work sixteen hours **a**-day on as small an outlay as possible. Have not men, shut up in solitary imprisonment, found an interest in marking the moments by straight strokes of a certain length on the wall, until the growth of the sum of straight strokes, arranged in triangles, has become a **mastering** purpose? Do we not **wile** away moments of **inanity** or **fatigued** waiting by repeating some trivial movement or sound, until the repetition has bred a want, which is **incipient** habit? That will help us to understand how the

Thesaurus

a-day: (*n*) target date.
beset: (*v*) beleaguer, afflict, assault, siege, molest, worry, attack, plague, obsess, assail; (*adv, v*) surround.
falsity: (*n*) deceit, fabrication, lie, falsification, falseness, deception, fable, disloyalty, dishonesty, unreality, fiction. ANTONYMS: (*n*) validity, verity.
fatigued: (*adj*) tired, weary, beat, worn, tired out, jaded, spent, worn out, done in, fagged, run-down. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) refreshed, alert, lively, energized, energetic.
heightened: (*adj*) excited, intense, irritate, keen, resonant, sensitive.
ill-will: (*n*) enmity.
inanity: (*n*) absurdity, vacuity, folly, idiocy, stupidity, silliness, emptiness, nonsense, mindlessness; (*adj*) inane, vanity. ANTONYMS: (*n*) sense, logic.
incipient: (*adj*) initial, budding, nascent, imperfectly formed, commencing, first, undeveloped; (*adj, v*) introductory; (*v*) inceptive; (*n*) beginning.
mastering: (*adj*) victorious.
repulsion: (*n*) repugnance, repellency, hatred, antipathy, aversion, horror, disgust, repulse, distaste, hate, rebuff. ANTONYMS: (*n*) charm, love, magnetism, appeal, liking, delight.
wile: (*n*) trick, ruse, guile, deception, artifice, deceit, cheat, fraud, juggle; (*n, v*) dodge, stratagem. ANTONYM: (*n*) stupidity.

love of accumulating money grows an absorbing passion in men whose imaginations, even in the very beginning of their **hoard**, showed them no purpose beyond it. Marner wanted the **heaps** of ten to grow into a square, and then into a larger square; and every added guinea, while it was itself a satisfaction, bred a new desire. In this strange world, made a hopeless riddle to him, he might, if he had had a less intense nature, have sat weaving, weaving--looking towards the end of his pattern, or towards the end of his web, till he forgot the riddle, and everything else but his immediate sensations; but the money had come to mark off his weaving into periods, and the money not only grew, but it remained with him. He began to think it was conscious of him, as his loom was, and he would on no account have exchanged those coins, which had become his familiars, for other coins with unknown faces. He handled them, he counted them, till their form and colour were like the satisfaction of a thirst to him; but it was only in the night, when his work was done, that he drew them out to enjoy their companionship. He had taken up some bricks in his floor underneath his loom, and here he had made a hole in which he set the iron pot that contained his guineas and silver coins, covering the bricks with sand whenever he replaced them. Not that the idea of being **robbed** presented itself often or strongly to his mind: **hoarding** was common in country districts in those days; there were old labourers in the parish of Raveloe who were known to have their savings by them, probably inside their flock-beds; but their **rustic** neighbours, though not all of them as honest as their ancestors in the days of King Alfred, had not imaginations bold enough to lay a plan of burglary. How could they have spent the money in their own village without **betraying** themselves? They would be obliged to "run away"--a course as dark and dubious as a balloon journey.

So, year after year, Silas Marner had lived in this solitude, his guineas rising in the iron pot, and his life **narrowing** and **hardening** itself more and more into a mere **pulsation** of desire and satisfaction that had no relation to any other being. His life had reduced itself to the functions of weaving and hoarding, without any contemplation of an end towards which the functions tended. The same sort of process has perhaps been undergone by wiser men, when they have been cut off

Thesaurus

betraying: (*adj*) treacherous, revealing, Judas.
hardening: (*v*) harden; (*n*) solidification, curing, sclerosis, callosity, calcification, symptom, inurement, hardener; (*adj*) reprobation, perversion.
heaps: (*adj, n*) lots, much; (*n*) masses, oodles, piles, stacks, many, tons, plenty, lot, accumulation. ANTONYM: (*adj*) inadequate.
hoard: (*v*) amass, gather, collect, garner; (*n, v*) cache, store, stock, heap, bank, stash; (*n*) accumulation. ANTONYMS: (*v*) squander, disperse, spend, use.
hoarding: (*n*) billboard, hoard, garner, signboard, cumulation, board, save, hoards, store, notice, poster.
narrowing: (*n*) contraction, tightening, coarctation, stricture, angustation; (*adj*) dwindling, tapering, constrictive, constricting, binding; (*adj, n*) tapering off. ANTONYM: (*n*) expansion.
pulsation: (*n*) pulse, beat, pounding, impulse, heartbeat, throb, tremor, pulsing, palpitation, throbbing, beating.
robbed: (*adj*) plundered, rubato, fleeced, borrowed, bereft.
rustic: (*n*) countryman, peasant; (*adj*) rural, pastoral, boorish, country, bucolic, provincial, hick, agrestic, countrified. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) town, urbane, cultured, city, sophisticated.

from faith and love--only, instead of a loom and a heap of guineas, they have had some erudite research, some ingenious project, or some well-knit theory. Strangely Marner's face and figure shrank and bent themselves into a constant mechanical relation to the objects of his life, so that he produced the same sort of impression as a handle or a crooked tube, which has no meaning standing apart. The prominent eyes that used to look trusting and dreamy, now looked as if they had been made to see only one kind of thing that was very small, like tiny grain, for which they hunted everywhere: and he was so **withered** and yellow, that, though he was not yet forty, the children always called him "Old Master Marner".

Yet even in this stage of withering a little incident happened, which showed that the sap of affection was not all gone. It was one of his daily tasks to fetch his water from a well a couple of fields off, and for this purpose, ever since he came to Raveloe, he had had a brown earthenware pot, which he held as his most precious **utensil** among the very few **conveniences** he had granted himself. It had been his companion for twelve years, always standing on the same spot, always lending its handle to him in the early morning, so that its form had an expression for him of willing **helpfulness**, and the impress of its handle on his palm gave a satisfaction mingled with that of having the fresh clear water. One day as he was returning from the well, he stumbled against the step of the stile, and his brown pot, falling with force against the stones that **overarched** the ditch below him, was broken in three pieces. Silas picked up the pieces and carried them home with grief in his heart. The brown pot could never be of use to him any more, but he stuck the bits together and propped the ruin in its old place for a memorial.

This is the history of Silas Marner, until the fifteenth year after he came to Raveloe. The **livelong** day he sat in his loom, his ear filled with its monotony, his eyes bent close down on the slow growth of **sameness** in the **brownish** web, his muscles moving with such even repetition that their pause seemed almost as much a constraint as the holding of his breath. But at night came his **revelry**: at night he closed his shutters, and made fast his doors, and drew forth his gold.

Thesaurus

brownish: (*n*) bronze, tan; (*adj*) chromatic, subfuscous.
conveniences: (*n*) creature comforts, comforts, convenience, living, support, livelihood, keep, sustenance, facility, facilities, device.
helpfulness: (*n*) use, usefulness, avail, kindness, friendliness, cooperation, utility, benefit, good will, humanity, kindliness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) uncooperativeness, cruelty, inefficiency, malice.
livelong: (*n*) Sedum telephium, sedum, orpin, orpine; (*adj*) durable, lasting.
overarched: (*adj*) arching over, fornicated.
revelry: (*adj, n*) revels; (*n*) debauchery, festivity, orgy, merriment, revel, carnival, mirth, gaiety, carousal, jollification.
sameness: (*n*) equality, resemblance, monotony, similarity, identicalness, parity, unvariedness, oneness, likeness, dullness, tedium. ANTONYMS: (*n*) variety, variation, uniqueness, inconsistency, contrast, variability.
utensil: (*n*) implement, tool, instrument, device, gadget, apparatus, organ, engine, contrivance, appliance, funnel.
withered: (*adj*) wizened, sear, shriveled, thin, shrunken, dry, dried up, wilted, faded, wizen; (*v*) lame. ANTONYM: (*adj*) plump.

Long ago the heap of coins had become too large for the iron pot to hold them, and he had made for them two thick leather bags, which wasted no room in their resting-place, but lent themselves **flexibly** to every corner. How the guineas shone as they came pouring out of the dark leather mouths! The silver bore no large proportion in amount to the gold, because the long pieces of linen which formed his chief work were always partly paid for in gold, and out of the silver he supplied his own bodily wants, choosing always the shillings and sixpences to spend in this way. He loved the guineas best, but he would not change the silver--the crowns and half-crowns that were his own earnings, **begotten** by his labour; he loved them all. He spread them out in heaps and **bathed** his hands in them; then he counted them and set them up in regular piles, and felt their rounded outline between his thumb and fingers, and thought **fondly** of the guineas that were only half-earned by the work in his loom, as if they had been **unborn** children--thought of the guineas that were coming slowly through the coming years, through all his life, which spread far away before him, the end quite hidden by countless days of weaving. No wonder his thoughts were still with his loom and his money when he made his journeys through the fields and the lanes to fetch and carry home his work, so that his steps never wandered to the hedge-banks and the lane-side in search of the once familiar herbs: these too belonged to the past, from which his life had shrunk away, like a **rivulet** that has sunk far down from the **grassy** fringe of its old breadth into a little shivering thread, that cuts a **groove** for itself in the barren sand.

But about the Christmas of that fifteenth year, a second great change came over Marner's life, and his history became **blent** in a **singular** manner with the life of his neighbours.

Thesaurus

bathed: (*adj*) sweaty.
begotten: (*adj*) generated, biological, create.
blent: (*adj*) mixed.
flexibly: (*adv*) plasticly, elastically, elasticly, lithely, acrobatically, athletically, gymnastically, supplely, openly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) inflexibly, stubbornly.
fondly: (*adv*) lovingly, tenderly, warmly, kindly, caringly, adoringly, devotedly, amorously, dearly, dotingly, foolishly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) coldly, ill.
grassy: (*adj*) verdant, gramineous, weedy, herby, woody, fertile, blossoming, abundant, leafy, lush, flourishing. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) grassless, urban, withering.
groove: (*n, v*) channel, rut, chamfer, score, crease; (*v*) flute; (*n*) ditch, cut, track, custom, notch. ANTONYMS: (*n*) bump, ridge.
rivulet: (*n*) stream, creek, streamlet, brook, arroyo, brooklet, rillet, runnel, watercourse, gill, river.
singular: (*adj, n*) extraordinary; (*adj*) odd, individual, particular, peculiar, phenomenal, rare, queer, single, quaint, exceptional. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) ordinary, normal, together, usual, customary.
unborn: (*adj*) uncreated, unmade, unproduced, unconceived, unbred, not begotten, unbegotten; (*n*) posterity. ANTONYM: (*adj*) born.

CHAPTER III

The greatest man in Raveloe was Squire Cass, who lived in the large red house with the handsome flight of stone steps in front and the high stables behind it, nearly opposite the church. He was only one among several landed parishioners, but he alone was honoured with the title of Squire; for though Mr. Osgood's family was also understood to be of timeless origin--the Raveloe imagination having never ventured back to that fearful blank when there were no Osgoods--still, he merely owned the farm he occupied; whereas Squire Cass had a tenant or two, who complained of the game to him quite as if he had been a lord.

It was still that glorious war-time which was felt to be a peculiar favour of Providence towards the landed interest, and the fall of prices had not yet come to carry the race of small squires and yeomen down that road to ruin for which extravagant habits and bad **husbandry** were **plentifully anointing** their wheels. I am speaking now in relation to Raveloe and the parishes that resembled it; for our old-fashioned country life had many different aspects, as all life must have when it is spread over a various surface, and breathed on variously by **multitudinous** currents, from the winds of heaven to the thoughts of men, which are for ever moving and crossing each other with **incalculable** results. Raveloe lay low among the bushy trees and the **rutted** lanes, aloof from the currents of industrial energy and Puritan **earnestness**: the rich ate and drank freely,

Thesaurus

anointing: (*v*) plating, barrel plating; (*n*) inunction, anointment.
earnestness: (*n*) seriousness, sincerity, gravity, fervor, devotion, graveness, staidness, honesty; (*adj, n*) ardor, zeal, intentness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) slackness, lightness, carelessness, frivolousness, cheerfulness, insincerity, flippancy.
husbandry: (*n*) cultivation, farming, economy, frugality, culture, conservation, thrift, tillage, dairying, horticulture, gardening.
incalculable: (*adj*) countless, innumerable, numberless, boundless, inestimable, immense, infinite, myriad, numerous, invaluable, unpredictable. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) calculable, negligible, limited, worthless, tiny, slight, finite, few, definite, small, minor.
multitudinous: (*adj*) innumerable, infinite, manifold, multiple, numberless, myriad, many, numerous, thick, populous, innumerous.
plentifully: (*adv*) plenteously, bountifully, bounteously, abundantly, profusely, richly, fully, liberally, opulently, amply, prolifically. ANTONYM: (*adv*) meagerly.
rutted: (*adj*) uneven, not smooth, lined, jagged, irregular, rough, furrowed, crumpled, potholed, not level, bumpy. ANTONYM: (*adj*) level.

accepting **gout** and **apoplexy** as things that ran mysteriously in respectable families, and the poor thought that the rich were entirely in the right of it to lead a jolly life; besides, their **feasting** caused a multiplication of **orts**, which were the heirlooms of the poor. Betty Jay scented the boiling of Squire Cass's hams, but her longing was arrested by the **unctuous** liquor in which they were **boiled**; and when the seasons brought round the great merry-makings, they were regarded on all hands as a fine thing for the poor. For the Raveloe feasts were like the rounds of beef and the barrels of ale--they were on a large scale, and lasted a good while, especially in the winter-time. After ladies had packed up their best gowns and top-knots in bandboxes, and had incurred the risk of **fording** streams on pillions with the precious burden in rainy or **snowy** weather, when there was no knowing how high the water would rise, it was not to be supposed that they looked forward to a brief pleasure. On this ground it was always contrived in the dark seasons, when there was little work to be done, and the hours were long, that several neighbours should keep open house in succession. So soon as Squire Cass's standing dishes diminished in plenty and freshness, his guests had nothing to do but to walk a little higher up the village to Mr. Osgood's, at the Orchards, and they found hams and chines **uncut**, pork-pies with the scent of the fire in them, spun butter in all its freshness--everything, in fact, that appetites at leisure could desire, in perhaps greater perfection, though not in greater abundance, than at Squire Cass's.

For the Squire's wife had died long ago, and the Red House was without that presence of the wife and mother which is the fountain of wholesome love and fear in parlour and kitchen; and this helped to account not only for there being more profusion than finished excellence in the holiday provisions, but also for the frequency with which the proud Squire condescended to **preside** in the parlour of the Rainbow rather than under the shadow of his own dark **wainscot**; perhaps, also, for the fact that his sons had turned out rather ill. Raveloe was not a place where moral censure was severe, but it was thought a weakness in the Squire that he had kept all his sons at home in idleness; and though some licence was to be allowed to young men whose fathers could afford it, people shook their heads at the courses of the second son, Dunstan, commonly called Dunsey

Thesaurus

apoplexy: (*n*) stroke, CVA, seizure, ictus; (*adj*) paralysis, inanition, collapse, deliquium, exhaustion, sideration, syncope.
boiled: (*adj*) intoxicated, poached, stewed; (*v*) sodden.
feasting: (*n*) carnival, eating.
fording: (*n*) crossing, deep fording, Edsel Bryant ford, ford Madox ford.
gout: (*n*) taste, relish, arthritis, go-out; (*v*) cephalalgia, earache, otalgia, odontalgia, neuralgia, lumbago, sciatica.
orts: (*n*) candle ends, odds and ends, heeltap, debris, detritus; (*adj*) trash, scourings, rubble, sweepings, refuse, waste.
preside: (*v*) manage, lead, conduct, command, control, direct, rule, moderate, guide, chair, preside over.
snowy: (*adj*) white, pure, clean, blank, hoary, achromatic, snow-white, unblemished, wintry, wet, favorite.
unctuous: (*adj*) greasy, oleaginous, smooth, buttery, fulsome, fat, adipose, fatty; (*adj, v*) sanctimonious; (*v*) soapy, pietistical.
uncut: (*adj*) complete, untrimmed, standing, intact, unbroken, unshorn, unsevered; (*n*) unabridged; (*adj, n*) boisterous, harsh, grating. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) mown, trimmed.
wainscot: (*n*) wainscoting, panel, plinth, wall, panelling, parietes, skirting board, wainscotting, lining, paneling.

Cass, whose taste for swopping and **betting** might turn out to be a **sowing** of something worse than wild oats. To be sure, the neighbours said, it was no matter what became of Dunsey--a spiteful **jeering** fellow, who seemed to enjoy his drink the more when other people went dry--always provided that his **doings** did not bring trouble on a family like Squire Cass's, with a monument in the church, and tankards older than King George. But it would be a thousand pities if Mr. Godfrey, the eldest, a fine open-faced good-natured young man who was to come into the land some day, should take to going along the same road with his brother, as he had seemed to do of late. If he went on in that way, he would lose Miss Nancy Lammeter; for it was well known that she had looked very shyly on him ever since last Whitsuntide **twelvemonth**, when there was so much talk about his being away from home days and days together. There was something wrong, more than common--that was quite clear; for Mr. Godfrey didn't look half so fresh-coloured and open as he used to do. At one time everybody was saying, What a handsome couple he and Miss Nancy Lammeter would make! and if she could come to be mistress at the Red House, there would be a fine change, for the Lammeters had been brought up in that way, that they never suffered a pinch of salt to be wasted, and yet everybody in their household had of the best, according to his place. Such a daughter-in-law would be a saving to the old Squire, if she never brought a penny to her fortune; for it was to be feared that, notwithstanding his **incomings**, there were more holes in his pocket than the one where he put his own hand in. But if Mr. Godfrey didn't turn over a new leaf, he might say "Good-bye" to Miss Nancy Lammeter.

It was the once hopeful Godfrey who was standing, with his hands in his side-pockets and his back to the fire, in the dark **wainscoted** parlour, one late November afternoon in that fifteenth year of Silas Marner's life at Raveloe. The fading grey light fell dimly on the walls decorated with guns, whips, and foxes' brushes, on coats and hats flung on the **chairs**, on tankards sending forth a scent of flat ale, and on a half-choked fire, with pipes **propped** up in the chimney-corners: signs of a domestic life **destitute** of any hallowing charm, with which the look of gloomy **vexation** on Godfrey's blond face was in sad **accordance**. He seemed to be waiting and listening for some one's approach, and presently the

Thesaurus

accordance: (*n*) harmony, agreement, conformity, unison, concordance, coincidence, accordancy, admission, fitness, consensus, concent.
betting: (*adj*) gambling, dissipated, sporting; (*n*) gaming.
chairs: (*n*) seats.
destitute: (*adj*) impoverished, needy, bankrupt, broke, poor, helpless, impecunious, penniless, necessitous; (*adj, v*) forlorn, devoid. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) wealthy, privileged, prosperous, solvent.
doings: (*n*) conduct, behavior, behaviour, deportment, demeanour, proceeding, episode, traffic; (*v*) act, deed, job.
incomings: (*n*) income, innings, return, proceeds, revenue.
jeering: (*adj, n*) mocking; (*n*) jeer, scoffing, mockery, derision, scoff, scorn, banter; (*adj*) taunting, gibelike; (*v*) deride. ANTONYM: (*n*) clapping.
propped: (*adj*) fulcrate.
sowing: (*v*) plowing, tilling; (*n*) insemination, semination.
twelvemonth: (*n*) calendar year, civil year, financial year, common year, amount of time, time period, period of time, bissextile year, class, yr, period.
vexation: (*adj, n*) annoyance, nuisance; (*n*) irritation, worry, aggravation, displeasure, chagrin, chafe, anger, frustration, botheration.
wainscoted: (*adj*) decorated.

sound of a heavy step, with an accompanying whistle, was heard across the large empty entrance-hall.

The door opened, and a thick-set, heavy-looking young man entered, with the flushed face and the **gratuitously elated** bearing which mark the first stage of **intoxication**. It was Dunsey, and at the sight of him Godfrey's face parted with some of its gloom to take on the more active expression of hatred. The handsome brown **spaniel** that lay on the hearth **retreated** under the chair in the chimney-corner.

"Well, Master Godfrey, what do you want with me?" said Dunsey, in a **mocking** tone. "You're my elders and betters, you know; I was obliged to come when you sent for me."

"Why, this is what I want--and just shake yourself sober and listen, will you?" said Godfrey, savagely. He had himself been drinking more than was good for him, trying to turn his gloom into uncalculating anger. "I want to tell you, I must hand over that rent of Fowler's to the Squire, or else tell him I gave it you; for he's threatening to **distrain** for it, and it'll all be out soon, whether I tell him or not. He said, just now, before he went out, he should send word to Cox to distrain, if Fowler didn't come and pay up his arrears this week. The Squire's short o' cash, and in no humour to stand any nonsense; and you know what he threatened, if ever he found you making away with his money again. So, see and get the money, and pretty quickly, will you?"

"Oh!" said Dunsey, **sneeringly**, coming nearer to his brother and looking in his face. "Suppose, now, you get the money yourself, and save me the trouble, eh? Since you was so kind as to hand it over to me, you'll not refuse me the kindness to pay it back for me: it was your brotherly love made you do it, you know."

Godfrey bit his lips and **clenched** his fist. "Don't come near me with that look, else I'll knock you down."

"Oh no, you won't," said Dunsey, turning away on his heel, however. "Because I'm such a good-natured brother, you know. I might get you turned out

Thesaurus

clenched: (*adj*) tight, clinched.
distrain: (*n*) apprehend, arraign, cite, distress; (*v*) levy, reclaim, impose, repossess, sequester, seize, impound.
elated: (*adj*) joyful, delighted, jubilant, exultant, gleeful, happy, triumphant, overjoyed, proud, ecstatic; (*n*) buoyant. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) dejected, disappointed, sad, unhappy, miserable, down, depressed, despairing, blue, sorrowful, desolate.
gratuitously: (*adv*) needlessly, spontaneously, complimentarily, freely, unnecessarily, groundlessly, unwarrantedly, pointlessly, wantonly, voluntarily, superfluously.
intoxication: (*n*) inebriation, inebriety, poisoning, tipsiness, fascination, grogginess, ecstasy, daze, excitement, euphoria, wine.
mocking: (*adj*) derisive, ironic, jeering, mock, quizzical, sarcastic, taunting, derisory, teasing, sardonic, sneering. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) respectful, approving, complimentary, sympathetic; (*n*) praise.
retreated: (*adj*) withdrawn, people.
sneeringly: (*adv*) disdainfully, contemptuously, derisively, superciliously, snidely, scornfully, disrespectfully, condescendingly, sarcastically, sneering.
spaniel: (*n*) sycophant, beagle, harrier, clumber, bootlicker, springer, groveller, gun dog, groveler; (*v*) snob, lapdog.

of house and home, and cut off with a **shilling** any day. I might tell the Squire how his handsome son was married to that nice young woman, Molly Farren, and was very unhappy because he couldn't live with his drunken wife, and I should slip into your place as comfortable as could be. But you see, I don't do it--I'm so easy and **good**-natured. You'll take any trouble for me. You'll get the hundred pounds for me--I know you will."

"How can I get the money?" said Godfrey, **quivering**. "I haven't a shilling to **bless** myself with. And it's a lie that you'd slip into my place: you'd get yourself turned out too, that's all. For if you begin telling tales, I'll follow. Bob's my father's favourite--you know that very well. He'd only think himself well rid of you."

"Never mind," said Dunsey, **nodding** his head sideways as he looked out of the window. "It 'ud be very pleasant to me to go in your company--you're such a handsome brother, and we've always been so fond of **quarrelling** with one another, I shouldn't know what to do without you. But you'd like better for us both to stay at home together; I know you would. So you'll manage to get that little sum o' money, and I'll bid you **good**-bye, though I'm sorry to part."

Dunstan was moving off, but Godfrey rushed after him and seized him by the arm, saying, with an oath--

"I tell you, I have no money: I can get no money."

"Borrow of old Kimble."

"I tell you, he won't lend me any more, and I shan't ask him."

"Well, then, sell Wildfire."

"Yes, that's easy talking. I must have the money directly."

"Well, you've only got to ride him to the hunt to-morrow. There'll be Bryce and Keating there, for sure. You'll get more bids than one."

"I **daresay**, and get back home at eight o'clock, **splashed** up to the chin. I'm going to Mrs. Osgood's birthday dance."

Thesaurus

bless: (*v*) consecrate, celebrate, sanctify, anoint, eulogize, sign, praise, keep, grant, glorify; (*n*) blessing. ANTONYMS: (*v*) curse, condemn, disapprove, damn, disallow, deny.
daresay: (*v*) assume, deem.
good-bye: (*n*) bye, farewell, goodbye, goodby, vale, adios, cheerio.
good-natured: (*adj*) kindly, friendly, kind, obliging, gracious, kind-hearted, genial, good, bland, sweet, good-tempered.
nodding: (*adj*) cernuous, drooping, dozy, dozing, somnolent, drugged, pendulous, drowsing, droopy, annuent, flagging. ANTONYM: (*adj*) awake.
quarrelling: (*adj*) at variance, in dispute, in disagreement, in conflict; (*n*) dissension.
quivering: (*adj, n*) trembling, tremor, quaking, trepidation; (*n*) palpitation, quiver, vibration; (*adj*) flutter, quavering, shivering, tremulous. ANTONYM: (*adj*) steady.
shilling: (*n*) York shilling, Tanzanian shilling, British shilling, Kenyan shilling, Ugandan shilling, Somalian shilling, dock, cork, farthing, coin, cheat.
splashed: (*adj*) dabbled, bespattered, besplashed, spattered, marked, unclean, dirty, splattered, distributed, showy, dotted.

"Oho!" said Dunsey, turning his head on one side, and trying to speak in a small **mincing treble**. "And there's sweet Miss Nancy coming; and we shall dance with her, and promise never to be naughty again, and be taken into favour, and --"

"Hold your tongue about Miss Nancy, you fool," said Godfrey, turning red, "else I'll throttle you."

"What for?" said Dunsey, still in an artificial tone, but taking a whip from the table and beating the butt-end of it on his palm. "You've a very good chance. I'd advise you to creep up her sleeve again: it 'ud be saving time, if Molly should happen to take a drop too much **laudanum** some day, and make a widower of you. Miss Nancy wouldn't mind being a second, if she didn't know it. And you've got a good-natured brother, who'll keep your secret well, because you'll be so very **obliging** to him."

"I'll tell you what it is," said Godfrey, quivering, and pale again, "my patience is pretty near at an end. If you'd a little more **sharpness** in you, you might know that you may urge a man a bit too far, and make one leap as easy as another. I don't know but what it is so now: I may as well tell the Squire everything myself-- I should get you off my back, if I got nothing else. And, after all, he'll know some time. She's been threatening to come herself and tell him. So, don't flatter yourself that your secrecy's worth any price you choose to ask. You drain me of money till I have got nothing to **pacify** *her* with, and she'll do as she threatens some day. It's all one. I'll tell my father everything myself, and you may go to the devil."

Dunsey **perceived** that he had overshot his mark, and that there was a point at which even the **hesitating** Godfrey might be driven into decision. But he said, with an air of unconcern--

"As you please; but I'll have a draught of ale first." And ringing the bell, he threw himself across two chairs, and began to rap the window-seat with the handle of his whip.

Thesaurus

hesitating: (*adj*) indecisive, irresolute, undecided, doubtful, hesitate, reluctant, faltering, unwilling, hesitancy, backward, hesitatingly.
laudanum: (*v*) carminative, antispasmodic, demulcent, lullaby, sedative, lenitive; (*n*) tincture of opium.
mincing: (*adj*) mince, prim, mannered, twee, pretentious, foppish, affected, la-di-da, simpering, nice, sentimental.
obliging: (*adj, v*) complaisant, courteous; (*adj*) amiable, affable, gentle, kind, good, benign, pleasant, gracious, compliant. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) uncooperative, unkind, contrary, reticent.
pacify: (*adj, n, v*) calm, allay, compose, appease; (*adj, v*) mollify, lull, soothe; (*n, v*) ease; (*v*) conciliate, placate, moderate. ANTONYMS: (*v*) annoy, enrage, excite, infuriate, aggravate, displease, inflame, provoke.
perceived: (*adj*) sensed, apparent, supposed, professed, ostensible.
sharpness: (*n, v*) keenness, edge; (*n*) severity, bitterness, asperity, acumen, poignancy, pungency, quickness, perspicacity; (*adj, n*) roughness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) dullness, haziness, softness, slowness, indistinctness, gentleness, evenness, courtesy, blandness, stupidity, kindness.
treble: (*adj*) threefold, ternary, triplex, thribble, double, dual, high, voce di testa, shrill; (*adj, v*) triple; (*v*) sing.

Godfrey stood, still with his back to the fire, uneasily moving his fingers among the contents of his side-pockets, and looking at the floor. That big muscular frame of his held plenty of animal courage, but helped him to no decision when the dangers to be braved were such as could neither be knocked down nor throttled. His natural **irresolution** and moral cowardice were exaggerated by a position in which dreaded consequences seemed to press equally on all sides, and his irritation had no sooner provoked him to defy Dunstan and anticipate all possible betrayals, than the miseries he must bring on himself by such a step seemed more **unendurable** to him than the present evil. The results of confession were not contingent, they were certain; whereas betrayal was not certain. From the near vision of that certainty he fell back on suspense and **vacillation** with a sense of repose. The disinherited son of a small squire, equally **disinclined** to dig and to beg, was almost as helpless as an uprooted tree, which, by the favour of earth and sky, has grown to a handsome bulk on the spot where it first shot upward. Perhaps it would have been possible to think of digging with some cheerfulness if Nancy Lammeter were to be won on those terms; but, since he must irrevocably lose *her* as well as the inheritance, and must break every tie but the one that **degraded** him and left him without motive for trying to recover his better self, he could imagine no future for himself on the other side of confession but that of "'listing for a soldier"--the most desperate step, short of suicide, in the eyes of respectable families. No! he would rather trust to casualties than to his own resolve--rather go on sitting at the feast, and sipping the wine he loved, though with the sword hanging over him and terror in his heart, than rush away into the cold darkness where there was no pleasure left. The utmost concession to Dunstan about the horse began to seem easy, compared with the fulfilment of his own threat. But his pride would not let him **recommence** the conversation otherwise than by continuing the quarrel. Dunstan was waiting for this, and took his ale in **shorter** draughts than usual.

"It's just like you," Godfrey burst out, in a bitter tone, "to talk about my selling Wildfire in that cool way--the last thing I've got to call my own, and the best bit of horse-flesh I ever had in my life. And if you'd got a spark of pride in

Thesaurus

degraded: (*adj*) debased, low, ignoble, debauched, depraved, abject, sordid, dishonored, corrupted, contemptible, base. ANTONYM: (*adj*) good.

disinclined: (*adj*) reluctant, loath, averse, indisposed, loth, backward, not content, opposed, dubious, afraid, not in the vein. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) tending, willing, leaning, eager, bent, keen, disposed.

irresolution: (*n*) indecisiveness, hesitation, doubt, irresoluteness, indetermination, shilly-shally, uncertainty, hesitancy, incertitude, dubiety, suspense. ANTONYMS: (*n*) resolution, decisiveness, determination.

recommence: (*v*) renew, restart, regenerate, rejuvenate, start again, take up, take it from the top, start afresh, shuffle the cards, reshuffle the cards, pick up.

shorter: (*adj*) smaller, inferior.

unendurable: (*adj*) intolerable, insufferable, insupportable, excruciating, impossible, unsupportable, uneasy, teasing, passionate, not patient, intolerant. ANTONYM: (*adj*) bearable.

vacillation: (*n*) indecision, irresolution, hesitancy, fluctuation, doubt, indecisiveness, instability, indetermination, oscillation, uncertainty, vibration. ANTONYMS: (*n*) decisiveness, insistence, resolution, determination.

you, you'd be ashamed to see the stables **emptied**, and everybody **sneering** about it. But it's my belief you'd sell yourself, if it was only for the pleasure of making somebody feel he'd got a bad bargain."

"Aye, aye," said Dunstan, very placably, "you do me justice, I see. You know I'm a **jewel** for 'ticing people into bargains. For which reason I advise you to let *me* sell Wildfire. I'd ride him to the hunt to-morrow for you, with pleasure. I shouldn't look so handsome as you in the saddle, but it's the horse they'll bid for, and not the rider."

"Yes, I daresay--trust my horse to you!"

"As you please," said Dunstan, rapping the window-seat again with an air of great **unconcern**. "It's *you* have got to pay Fowler's money; it's none of my business. You received the money from him when you went to Bramcote, and *you* told the Squire it wasn't paid. I'd nothing to do with that; you **chose** to be so obliging as to give it me, that was all. If you don't want to pay the money, let it alone; it's all one to me. But I was willing to accommodate you by undertaking to sell the horse, seeing it's not convenient to you to go so far to-morrow."

Godfrey was silent for some moments. He would have liked to spring on Dunstan, **wrench** the whip from his hand, and **flog** him to within an inch of his life; and no bodily fear could have deterred him; but he was **mastered** by another sort of fear, which was fed by feelings stronger even than his resentment. When he spoke again, it was in a half-conciliatory tone.

"Well, you mean no nonsense about the horse, eh? You'll sell him all fair, and hand over the money? If you don't, you know, everything 'ull go to **smash**, for I've got nothing else to trust to. And you'll have less pleasure in pulling the house over my head, when your own skull's to be broken too."

"Aye, aye," said Dunstan, rising; "all right. I thought you'd come round. I'm the fellow to bring old Bryce up to the scratch. I'll get you a hundred and twenty for him, if I get you a penny."

Thesaurus

chose: (*v*) choose, opt, decide; (*n*) thing.
emptied: (*adj*) empty, void, depleted, emptier, annulled, open, vacuous.
flog: (*v*) lash, whip, chastise, lick, trounce, flagellate, birch, castigate, cane, strap, wallop.
jewel: (*n*) gemstone, darling, diamond, jewelry, trinket, treasure, ornament, idol; (*adj, n*) bijou, precious stone; (*adj*) brilliant.
mastered: (*adj*) down pat, low, downhearted, perfecter, dispirited, depressed, declining, downcast, down in the mouth, cut down, beaten.
smash: (*n, v*) crash, hit, bang, clash, knock; (*v*) shatter, crush, mash, break, defeat, ruin. ANTONYMS: (*v*) mend, preserve; (*n*) flop.
sneering: (*adj*) contemptuous, disdainful, sarcastic, mocking, snide, scornful, disparaging, disapproving; (*n*) mockery, disdain; (*adv*) sneeringly. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) respectful, admiring.
unconcern: (*n*) apathy, nonchalance, insouciance, coldness, detachment, impassiveness, insensibility, disregard, phlegm, carelessness, lethargy. ANTONYMS: (*n*) responsiveness, worry, anxiety, interest.
wrench: (*n, v*) pull, jerk, strain, turn, twist, tug, yank; (*n*) spanner; (*v*) distort, contort, force.

"But it'll perhaps rain cats and dogs to-morrow, as it did yesterday, and then you can't go," said Godfrey, hardly knowing whether he wished for that obstacle or not.

"Not *it*," said Dunstan. "I'm always lucky in my weather. It might rain if you wanted to go yourself. You never hold trumps, you know--I always do. You've got the beauty, you see, and I've got the luck, so you must keep me by you for your crooked sixpence; you'll *ne*-ver get along without me."

"Confound you, hold your tongue!" said Godfrey, impetuously. "And take care to keep sober to-morrow, else you'll get pitched on your head coming home, and Wildfire might be the worse for it."

"Make your tender heart easy," said Dunstan, opening the door. "You never knew me see double when I'd got a bargain to make; it 'ud spoil the fun. Besides, whenever I fall, I'm **warranted** to fall on my legs."

With that, Dunstan **slammed** the door behind him, and left Godfrey to that bitter **rumination** on his personal circumstances which was now unbroken from day to day save by the excitement of sporting, drinking, card-playing, or the rarer and less oblivious pleasure of seeing Miss Nancy Lammeter. The subtle and varied pains springing from the higher sensibility that accompanies higher culture, are perhaps less **pitiable** than that dreary absence of impersonal enjoyment and consolation which leaves ruder minds to the perpetual urgent companionship of their own griefs and discontents. The lives of those rural **forefathers**, whom we are apt to think very **prosaic** figures--men whose only work was to ride round their land, getting heavier and heavier in their saddles, and who passed the rest of their days in the half-listless gratification of senses **dulled** by monotony--had a certain **pathos** in them nevertheless. Calamities came to *them* too, and their early errors carried hard consequences: perhaps the love of some sweet maiden, the image of purity, order, and calm, had opened their eyes to the vision of a life in which the days would not seem too long, even without **rioting**; but the maiden was lost, and the vision passed away, and then what was left to them, especially when they had become too heavy for the hunt, or for carrying a gun over the furrows, but to drink and get merry, or to drink

Thesaurus

dulled: (*adj*) dull, blunted, benumbed, duller, blunt, uninterested, rounded, jaded, grayed, colorless, deadened.
forefathers: (*n*) patriarchs, forefather, ancestor, colony, lineage, family.
pathos: (*v*) emotion, inspiration, impression, affection; (*n*) poignancy, pity, ruth, commiseration, grief, poignance, sympathy.
pitiable: (*adj*) forlorn, abject, pathetic, miserable, pitiful, wretched, lamentable, poor, squalid; (*adj, v*) deplorable, mournful. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) privileged, strong.
prosaic: (*adj*) commonplace, dull, monotonous, pedestrian, prosy, ordinary, uninteresting, trite, boring, humdrum, everyday. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) idealistic, imaginative, sensitive, inspired, exciting, inspiring, interesting, original, romantic.
rioting: (*n*) disorder, tumult, howler, insubordination, orgy, public violence, reveling, grassation, agitation, drunken revelry; (*adj*) rebellious.
rumination: (*n*) contemplation, musing, consideration, reflexion, meditation, introspection, thought; (*v*) deglutition, epulation, gulp, manducation.
slammed: (*adj*) tight.
warranted: (*adj*) legitimate, secured, bonded, legal, locked, mistaken, necessary; (*v*) privileged, sanctioned, allowed; (*n*) securer.

and get angry, so that they might be independent of variety, and say over again with eager emphasis the things they had said already any time that twelvemonth? **Assuredly**, among these flushed and dull-eyed men there were some whom--thanks to their native human-kindness--even riot could never drive into brutality; men who, when their cheeks were fresh, had felt the keen point of sorrow or remorse, had been pierced by the **reeds** they leaned on, or had lightly put their limbs in **fetters** from which no struggle could loose them; and under these sad circumstances, common to us all, their thoughts could find no resting-place outside the ever-trodden round of their own petty history.

That, at least, was the condition of Godfrey Cass in this six-and-twentieth year of his life. A movement of compunction, helped by those small indefinable influences which every personal relation exerts on a **pliant** nature, had urged him into a secret marriage, which was a blight on his life. It was an ugly story of low passion, delusion, and waking from delusion, which needs not to be dragged from the privacy of Godfrey's bitter memory. He had long known that the delusion was partly due to a trap laid for him by Dunstan, who saw in his brother's degrading marriage the means of gratifying at once his jealous hate and his **cupidity**. And if Godfrey could have felt himself simply a victim, the iron bit that destiny had put into his mouth would have **chafed** him less intolerably. If the **curses** he muttered half aloud when he was alone had had no other object than Dunstan's diabolical cunning, he might have shrunk less from the consequences of **avowal**. But he had something else to curse--his own vicious folly, which now seemed as mad and unaccountable to him as almost all our follies and vices do when their promptings have long passed away. For four years he had thought of Nancy Lammeter, and wooed her with tacit patient worship, as the woman who made him think of the future with joy: she would be his wife, and would make home lovely to him, as his father's home had never been; and it would be easy, when she was always near, to shake off those foolish habits that were no pleasures, but only a feverish way of **annulling** vacancy. Godfrey's was an essentially domestic nature, bred up in a home where the hearth had no smiles, and where the daily habits were not **chastised** by the presence of household order. His easy disposition made him fall in unresistingly

Thesaurus

annulling: (*n*) cancellation, circumduction, abolition; (*adj*) negative.
assuredly: (*adv*) certainly, confidently, positively, securely, indeed, definitely, undoubtedly, admittedly, safely, insuredly, decidedly.
avowal: (*n*) declaration, assertion, affirmation, admission, statement, recognition, acknowledgement, announcement, confession, testimony; (*n, v*) profession.
chafed: (*adj*) uncomfortable, sore, painful, galled, angry; (*v*) fretted, agitated.
chastised: (*adj*) corrected.
cupidity: (*n*) covetousness, greed, avariciousness, greediness, lust, acquisitiveness, cacoethes, voracity, desire, eagerness; (*adj*) avidity. ANTONYMS: (*n*) aversion, dislike, distaste.
curses: (*n*) abuse.
fetters: (*n*) chains, captivity, bond, restraint, irons, handcuffs, iron, enduring; (*v*) confine, fee, embellish. ANTONYM: (*n*) liberation.
pliant: (*adj, v*) pliable, limber; (*adj*) elastic, plastic, ductile, malleable, adaptable, compliant, flexile, supple, lithe. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) inflexible, rigid, rebellious.
reeds: (*n*) Poaceae, grass family, Graminaceae, family Gramineae, family Graminaceae, bamboo, Gramineae.

with the family courses, but the need of some tender permanent affection, the longing for some influence that would make the good he preferred easy to pursue, caused the neatness, purity, and liberal **orderliness** of the Lammeter household, sunned by the smile of Nancy, to seem like those fresh bright hours of the morning when temptations go to sleep and leave the ear open to the voice of the good angel, inviting to industry, **sobriety**, and peace. And yet the hope of this paradise had not been enough to save him from a course which shut him out of it for ever. Instead of keeping fast hold of the strong silken rope by which Nancy would have drawn him safe to the green banks where it was easy to step firmly, he had let himself be dragged back into mud and slime, in which it was useless to struggle. He had made ties for himself which robbed him of all wholesome motive, and were a constant exasperation.

Still, there was one position worse than the present: it was the position he would be in when the ugly secret was disclosed; and the desire that continually triumphed over every other was that of warding off the evil day, when he would have to bear the consequences of his father's violent resentment for the wound inflicted on his family pride--would have, perhaps, to turn his back on that hereditary ease and dignity which, after all, was a sort of reason for living, and would carry with him the certainty that he was banished for ever from the sight and esteem of Nancy Lammeter. The longer the interval, the more chance there was of deliverance from some, at least, of the hateful consequences to which he had sold himself; the more opportunities remained for him to snatch the strange gratification of seeing Nancy, and gathering some faint indications of her lingering regard. Towards this gratification he was **impelled**, **fitfully**, every now and then, after having passed weeks in which he had **avoided** her as the far-off bright-winged prize that only made him spring forward and find his chain all the more **galling**. One of those fits of yearning was on him now, and it would have been strong enough to have persuaded him to trust Wildfire to Dunstan rather than disappoint the yearning, even if he had not had another reason for his **disinclination** towards the morrow's hunt. That other reason was the fact that the morning's meet was near Batherley, the market-town where the unhappy woman lived, whose image became more odious to him every day; and

Thesaurus

avoided: (*adj*) unpopular.
disinclination: (*n*) dislike, distaste, indisposition, reluctance, antipathy, opposition, disaffection, disrelish, unwillingness, disfavor; (*n, v*) disgust. ANTONYMS: (*n*) inclination, disposition, desire, tendency, keenness, willingness.
fitfully: (*adv*) intermittently, spasmodically, inconstantly, sporadically, unsteadily, unevenly, uncertainly, randomly, interruptedly, flickeringly, occasionally. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) recurrently, peacefully.
galling: (*adj, v*) irritating; (*v*) aggravating, provoking; (*adj*) exasperating, bitter, vexatious, vexing, maddening, infuriating, bothersome, harassing. ANTONYM: (*adj*) pleasing.
impelled: (*adj*) prompted, provoked, determined, compulsive, encouraged, goaded, motivated, bound.
orderliness: (*n*) system, tidiness, arrangement, trimness, neatness, method, methodicalness, status, discipline, kilter, regularity. ANTONYMS: (*n*) disorderliness, rowdiness, chaos, messiness.
sobriety: (*n*) temperance, seriousness, soberness, graveness, abstinence, earnestness, composure, sedateness, staidness; (*adj, n*) gravity; (*adj*) rationality. ANTONYMS: (*n*) excess, drunkenness, flippancy.

to his thought the whole **vicinage** was **haunted** by her. The **yoke** a man creates for himself by wrong-doing will breed hate in the kindliest nature; and the good-humoured, affectionate-hearted Godfrey Cass was fast becoming a bitter man, visited by cruel wishes, that seemed to enter, and **depart**, and enter again, like demons who had found in him a ready-garnished home.

What was he to do this evening to pass the time? He might as well go to the Rainbow, and hear the talk about the cock-fighting: everybody was there, and what else was there to be done? Though, for his own part, he did not care a **button** for cock-fighting. **Snuff**, the brown spaniel, who had placed herself in front of him, and had been watching him for some time, now jumped up in impatience for the expected **caress**. But Godfrey thrust her away without looking at her, and left the room, followed **humbly** by the unresenting Snuff--perhaps because she saw no other career open to her.

Thesaurus

button: (*n, v*) knob; (*adj, n*) tie; (*n*) knop, push button, push, key, fastening, clasp, bud, buckle; (*v*) fasten.
caress: (*v*) stroke, fondle, tickle, pat, pet, kiss, nuzzle, cuddle, coddle; (*n, v*) touch; (*n*) endearment. ANTONYM: (*n*) hit.
depart: (*v*) go, deviate, decease, diverge, start, stray, wander, leave, die, vary, part. ANTONYMS: (*v*) stay, arrive, enter, come, abide, conform, continue, remain, appear, converge, return.
haunted: (*adj*) ghostly, ghostlike, phantom, taken up, preoccupied, possessed, unearthly, magical, mad, infatuated, concerned.
humbly: (*adv*) lowly, meanly, modestly, submissively, low, shyly, lowlily, naturally, regretfully, remorsefully, repentantly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) conceitedly, haughtily, pompously, ostentatiously, unrepentantly, affluently, brashly, pretentiously.
snuff: (*v*) smell, kill, douse, slay, scent, snuffle, bump off, smother, snort; (*adj*) tobacco, nicotine.
vicinage: (*adj, n*) vicinity; (*n*) environs, confines, district, borderland, banlieue; (*adj*) purlieus.
yoke: (*adj, n, v*) couple, link; (*n, v*) pair, tie; (*adj, n*) brace; (*v*) connect, join, bind, attach; (*n*) coupling, team. ANTONYMS: (*v*) disconnect, disjoin.

CHAPTER IV

Dunstan Cass, setting off in the raw morning, at the **judiciously** quiet pace of a man who is obliged to ride to cover on his hunter, had to take his way along the lane which, at its farther **extremity**, passed by the piece of unenclosed ground called the Stone-pit, where stood the cottage, once a stone-cutter's shed, now for fifteen years inhabited by Silas Marner. The spot looked very **dreary** at this season, with the moist **trodden** clay about it, and the red, muddy water high up in the deserted quarry. That was Dunstan's first thought as he approached it; the second was, that the old fool of a weaver, whose loom he heard **rattling** already, had a great deal of money hidden somewhere. How was it that he, Dunstan Cass, who had often heard talk of Marner's **miserliness**, had never thought of suggesting to Godfrey that he should frighten or persuade the old fellow into lending the money on the excellent security of the young Squire's prospects? The resource occurred to him now as so easy and agreeable, especially as Marner's hoard was likely to be large enough to leave Godfrey a handsome surplus beyond his immediate needs, and enable him to accommodate his faithful brother, that he had almost turned the horse's head towards home again. Godfrey would be ready enough to accept the suggestion: he would snatch eagerly at a plan that might save him from **parting** with Wildfire. But when Dunstan's meditation reached this point, the inclination to go on grew strong and prevailed. He didn't want to give Godfrey that pleasure: he preferred that

Thesaurus

dreary: (*adj*) depressing, drab, dull, cheerless, drear, miserable, gloomy, dark, dismal, stuffy, disconsolate. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) interesting, cheerful, sunny, brilliant, lively, light, exciting, clear, cheery, pleasant, exotic.

extremity: (*n*) end, member, boundary, bound, close, appendage, limit, limb, ending, fringe, conclusion. ANTONYMS: (*n*) trunk, average, minimum, head, leniency.

judiciously: (*adv*) prudently, sagaciously, shrewdly, discreetly, discerningly, politically, cautiously, logically, rationally, sensibly, soundly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) foolishly, injudiciously, unwisely, illogically, imprudently.

miserliness: (*n*) avarice, meanness, stinginess, greediness, greed, rapacity, cheeseparing, avidity, miser, niggardliness, parsimony. ANTONYM: (*n*) generosity.

parting: (*n*) adieu, division, leave, departure, disunion, goodbye, leaving, segregation, dying, rupture; (*adj*) valedictory. ANTONYMS: (*n*) joining, meeting, connection, Reunion.

rattling: (*adj*) lively, brisk, racy, marvelous, fantastic, zippy, snappy, spanking, merry; (*adv*) very, real.

trodden: (*adj*) trampled, damaged, beaten, compressed, packed down. ANTONYM: (*adj*) loose.

Master Godfrey should be **vexed**. Moreover, Dunstan enjoyed the **self**-important consciousness of having a horse to sell, and the opportunity of driving a bargain, **swaggering**, and possibly taking somebody in. He might have all the satisfaction attendant on selling his brother's horse, and not the less have the further satisfaction of setting Godfrey to borrow Marner's money. So he rode on to cover.

Bryce and Keating were there, as Dunstan was quite sure they would be--he was such a lucky fellow.

"Heyday!" said Bryce, who had long had his eye on Wildfire, "you're on your brother's horse to-day: how's that?"

"Oh, I've swopped with him," said Dunstan, whose delight in lying, **grandly** independent of utility, was not to be diminished by the likelihood that his hearer would not believe him--"Wildfire's mine now."

"What! has he swopped with you for that big-boned **hack** of yours?" said Bryce, quite aware that he should get another lie in answer.

"Oh, there was a little account between us," said Dunsey, **carelessly**, "and Wildfire made it even. I **accommodated** him by taking the horse, though it was against my will, for I'd got an **itch** for a mare o' Jortin's--as rare a bit o' blood as ever you threw your leg across. But I shall keep Wildfire, now I've got him, though I'd a bid of a hundred and fifty for him the other day, from a man over at Flitton--he's buying for Lord Cromleck--a fellow with a cast in his eye, and a green waistcoat. But I mean to stick to Wildfire: I shan't get a better at a fence in a hurry. The mare's got more blood, but she's a bit too weak in the hind-quarters."

Bryce of course divined that Dunstan wanted to sell the horse, and Dunstan knew that he divined it (horse-dealing is only one of many human transactions carried on in this ingenious manner); and they both considered that the bargain was in its first stage, when Bryce replied ironically--

Thesaurus

accommodated: (*adj*) meet.
carelessly: (*adv*) incautiously, hastily, recklessly, heedlessly, casually, sloppily, imprudently, inconsiderately, rashly, negligently, unwarily. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) thoroughly, diligently, carefully, warily, laboriously, thoughtfully, attentively, daintily, methodically, discreetly, economically.
grandly: (*adv*) splendidly, gorgeously, magnificently, regally, majestically, beautifully, stately, grandiosely, illustriously, superbly, greatly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) simply, humbly.
hack: (*v*) chop, cut down, rip, gash, mutilate, fell; (*adj, v*) chop up; (*n*) hacker, drudge, nag, incision.
itch: (*n*) urge, desire, impulse, scabies; (*v*) irritate, prickle, tingle, scratch, chafe; (*adj*) itchy; (*n, v*) wish. ANTONYMS: (*n*) aversion, disinclination.
self-important: (*adj*) arrogant, proud, vain, pompous, consequential, bumptious, egotistic, exalted, stuffy.
swaggering: (*adj*) hectoring, swashbuckling, supercilious, sniffy, boastful, lordly, disdainful, prideful; (*v*) swagger; (*n*) boasting, bravado. ANTONYM: (*adj*) insecure.
vexed: (*adj*) troubled, irritated, angry, pestered, peeved, harassed, sore, harried, uneasy, cross, offended. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) calm, uncomplicated.

"I wonder at that now; I wonder you mean to keep him; for I never heard of a man who didn't want to sell his horse getting a bid of half as much again as the horse was worth. You'll be lucky if you get a hundred."

Keating rode up now, and the transaction became more complicated. It ended in the purchase of the horse by Bryce for a hundred and twenty, to be paid on the delivery of Wildfire, safe and sound, at the Batherley stables. It did occur to Dunsey that it might be wise for him to give up the day's hunting, proceed at once to Batherley, and, having waited for Bryce's return, hire a horse to carry him home with the money in his pocket. But the inclination for a run, encouraged by confidence in his luck, and by a draught of brandy from his pocket-pistol at the conclusion of the bargain, was not easy to overcome, especially with a horse under him that would take the fences to the admiration of the field. Dunstan, however, took one fence too many, and got his horse **pierced** with a hedge-stake. His own **ill**-favoured person, which was quite **unmarketable**, escaped without injury; but poor Wildfire, unconscious of his price, turned on his flank and painfully panted his last. It happened that Dunstan, a short time before, having had to get down to arrange his **stirrup**, had muttered a good many curses at this interruption, which had thrown him in the rear of the hunt near the moment of glory, and under this exasperation had taken the fences more blindly. He would soon have been up with the hounds again, when the fatal accident happened; and hence he was between eager riders in advance, not **troubling** themselves about what happened behind them, and **far**-off stragglers, who were as likely as not to pass quite aloof from the line of road in which Wildfire had fallen. Dunstan, whose nature it was to care more for immediate annoyances than for remote consequences, no sooner recovered his legs, and saw that it was all over with Wildfire, than he felt a satisfaction at the absence of witnesses to a position which no swaggering could make **enviable**. **Reinforcing** himself, after his shake, with a little brandy and much **swearing**, he walked as fast as he could to a **coppice** on his right hand, through which it occurred to him that he could make his way to Batherley without danger of encountering any member of the hunt. His first intention was to hire a horse there and ride home **forthwith**, for to walk many miles without a gun in his

Thesaurus

coppice: (*n*) copse, brush, brake, underwood, thicket, wood, spinney, underbrush, undergrowth, grove, canebrake.
enviable: (*adj*) invidious, advantageous, envious, happy, pleasing, attractive. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) unwelcomed, undesirable, undesired, unpleasant.
far-off: (*adj*) distant, far, faraway, outlying, extreme, inaccessible, last, long, obscure, unknown, wide.
forthwith: (*adv*) directly, immediately, at once, now, instantly, straight, presently, straightaway, incontinently; (*adj, adv*) quickly; (*adj*) immediate.
ill-favoured: (*adj*) ill-favored.
pierced: (*adj*) punctured, perforate, penetrated, cut, cleft.
reinforcing: (*n*) reinforcement, development, splicing.
stirrup: (*n*) support, brace, clip, shoe, sole, splint, sprit, stirrup iron, rod, suspension strap, stilts.
swearing: (*n*) curse, expletive, profanity, oath, abuse, blasphemy, swearword, execration, adjuration, asseveration; (*v*) swear.
troubling: (*adj*) worrying, disquieting, distressing, distressful, disconcerting, alarming, perturbing, bad, annoying, sad, worrisome. ANTONYM: (*adj*) reassuring.
unmarketable: (*adj*) unvendible, unsalable.

hand, and along an ordinary road, was as much out of the question to him as to other spirited young men of his kind. He did not much mind about taking the bad news to Godfrey, for he had to offer him at the same time the resource of Marner's money; and if Godfrey kicked, as he always did, at the notion of making a fresh debt from which he himself got the smallest share of advantage, why, he wouldn't kick long: Dunstan felt sure he could worry Godfrey into anything. The idea of Marner's money kept growing in **vividness**, now the want of it had become immediate; the prospect of having to make his appearance with the muddy boots of a pedestrian at Batherley, and to encounter the grinning queries of stablemen, stood unpleasantly in the way of his impatience to be back at Raveloe and carry out his **felicitous** plan; and a casual visitation of his waistcoat-pocket, as he was **ruminating**, awakened his memory to the fact that the two or three small coins his forefinger encountered there were of too pale a colour to cover that small debt, without payment of which the stable-keeper had declared he would never do any more business with Dunsey Cass. After all, according to the direction in which the run had brought him, he was not so very much farther from home than he was from Batherley; but Dunsey, not being remarkable for **clearness** of head, was only led to this conclusion by the gradual perception that there were other reasons for choosing the unprecedented course of walking home. It was now nearly four o'clock, and a mist was gathering: the sooner he got into the road the better. He remembered having crossed the road and seen the finger-post only a little while before Wildfire broke down; so, buttoning his coat, twisting the lash of his hunting-whip **compactly** round the handle, and rapping the tops of his boots with a **self**-possessed air, as if to assure himself that he was not at all taken by surprise, he set off with the sense that he was undertaking a remarkable feat of bodily exertion, which somehow and at some time he should be able to dress up and **magnify** to the admiration of a select circle at the Rainbow. When a young gentleman like Dunsey is reduced to so exceptional a mode of locomotion as walking, a whip in his hand is a desirable corrective to a too bewildering dreamy sense of unwontedness in his position; and Dunstan, as he went along through the gathering mist, was always rapping his whip somewhere. It was Godfrey's whip, which he had chosen to take

Thesaurus

clearness: (*n*) clarity, brightness, distinctness, perspicuity, lucidity, explicitness, sharpness, simplicity, purity, limpidity, intelligibility. ANTONYMS: (*n*) ambiguity, opacity, dirtiness, vagueness, unclearness, obscureness, indistinctness, clutter, haziness, mustiness.

compactly: (*adv*) solidly, succinctly, closely, thickly, tightly, firmly, heavily, neatly, pithily, concisely, trimly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) loosely, sparsely, awkwardly.

felicitous: (*adj*) apt, suitable, appropriate, proper, applicable, fortunate, apposite, clever, cute, lucky; (*adj, n*) happy. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) inappropriate, infelicitous, inopportune, unfitting, unhappy.

magnify: (*v*) exaggerate, enhance, aggrandize, enlarge, intensify, laud, glorify, expand, increase, extend, aggravate. ANTONYMS: (*v*) reduce, understate, minimize, shrink, decrease, alleviate.

ruminating: (*adj*) pensive, ruminal, ruminant; (*n*) abstraction.

self-possessed: (*adj*) calm, composed, level-headed, steady, imperturbable, serene, cool, collected, placid, unflappable, sober.

vividness: (*n*) strength, colour, color, chroma, saturation, brightness, vividity, vivacity, brilliance, clarity, vibrancy. ANTONYMS: (*n*) vagueness, weakness.

without leave because it had a gold handle; of course no one could see, when Dunstan held it, that the name *Godfrey Cass* was cut in deep letters on that gold handle--they could only see that it was a very handsome whip. Dunsey was not without fear that he might meet some acquaintance in whose eyes he would cut a pitiable figure, for mist is no screen when people get close to each other; but when he at last found himself in the well-known Raveloe lanes without having met a soul, he silently remarked that that was part of his usual good luck. But now the mist, helped by the evening darkness, was more of a screen than he desired, for it hid the ruts into which his feet were liable to slip--hid everything, so that he had to guide his steps by dragging his whip along the low bushes in advance of the **hedgerow**. He must soon, he thought, be getting near the opening at the Stone-pits: he should find it out by the break in the hedgerow. He found it out, however, by another circumstance which he had not expected--namely, by certain gleams of light, which he presently guessed to proceed from Silas Marner's cottage. That cottage and the money hidden within it had been in his mind continually during his walk, and he had been **imagining** ways of cajoling and tempting the weaver to part with the immediate possession of his money for the sake of receiving interest. Dunstan felt as if there must be a little frightening added to the **cajolery**, for his own **arithmetical** convictions were not clear enough to afford him any **forcible** demonstration as to the advantages of interest; and as for security, he regarded it vaguely as a means of **cheating** a man by making him believe that he would be paid. Altogether, the operation on the miser's mind was a task that Godfrey would be sure to hand over to his more daring and cunning brother: Dunstan had made up his mind to that; and by the time he saw the light gleaming through the chinks of Marner's shutters, the idea of a dialogue with the weaver had become so familiar to him, that it occurred to him as quite a natural thing to make the acquaintance forthwith. There might be several conveniences attending this course: the weaver had possibly got a **lantern**, and Dunstan was tired of feeling his way. He was still nearly three-quarters of a mile from home, and the lane was becoming **unpleasantly** slippery, for the mist was passing into rain. He turned up the bank, not without some fear lest he might miss the right way, since he was not certain whether the light were

Thesaurus

arithmetical: (*adj*) statistical, mathematical, numerable, calculable, computable, numerical, numeric, analytic, algebraic.
cajolery: (*n*) cajolement, blarney, adulation, enticement, palaver, flattery, persuasion, wheedling, humbug, soft soap, allurement.
cheating: (*n*) cheat, dishonesty, imposition, imposture, fraud, duplicity, deception, chicanery; (*adj*) dirty, cunning, deceiving. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) honest, faithful; (*n*) honesty, truthfulness.
forcible: (*adj*) forceful, active, energetic, powerful, strong, violent, coercive, vigorous, effective, convincing; (*prep*) conclusive. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) weak, gentle, peaceful.
hedgerow: (*n*) fence, fencing.
imagining: (*n*) conception, daydream, fantasy, opinion; (*v*) imagine; (*adj*) imaginant.
lantern: (*n*) beacon, light, dormer, tube, lighting fitting, bedside light, street light, street lamp, oil lamp, lime light, lanthorn.
unpleasantly: (*adv*) distastefully, disagreeably, rudely, obnoxiously, bitterly, painfully, awfully, troublesomely, offensively, hardly, displeasingly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) delightfully, agreeably, kindly, politely, graciously, attractively, sweetly, well, humbly.

in front or on the side of the cottage. But he felt the ground before him cautiously with his whip-handle, and at last arrived safely at the door. He knocked loudly, rather enjoying the idea that the old fellow would be frightened at the sudden noise. He heard no movement in reply: all was silence in the cottage. Was the weaver gone to bed, then? If so, why had he left a light? That was a strange **forgetfulness** in a **miser**. Dunstan knocked still more loudly, and, without pausing for a reply, pushed his fingers through the latch-hole, intending to shake the door and pull the latch-string up and down, not doubting that the door was fastened. But, to his surprise, at this double motion the door opened, and he found himself in front of a bright fire which lit up every corner of the cottage--the bed, the loom, the three chairs, and the table-- and showed him that Marner was not there.

Nothing at that moment could be much more inviting to Dunsey than the bright fire on the brick hearth: he walked in and seated himself by it at once. There was something in front of the fire, too, that would have been inviting to a hungry man, if it had been in a different stage of cooking. It was a small bit of pork suspended from the kettle-hanger by a string passed through a large door-key, in a way known to primitive housekeepers unpossessed of **jacks**. But the pork had been hung at the **farthest** extremity of the hanger, apparently to prevent the **roasting** from proceeding too rapidly during the owner's absence. The old staring **simpleton** had hot meat for his supper, then? thought Dunstan. People had always said he lived on **mouldy** bread, on purpose to check his appetite. But where could he be at this time, and on such an evening, leaving his supper in this stage of preparation, and his door **unfastened**? Dunstan's own recent difficulty in making his way suggested to him that the weaver had perhaps gone outside his cottage to fetch in fuel, or for some such brief purpose, and had slipped into the Stone-pit. That was an interesting idea to Dunstan, carrying consequences of entire novelty. If the weaver was dead, who had a right to his money? Who would know where his money was hidden? *Who would know that anybody had come to take it away?* He went no farther into the subtleties of evidence: the pressing question, "Where *is* the money?" now took such entire possession of him as to make him quite forget that the weaver's death was not a

Thesaurus

farthest: (*adj*) ultimate, extreme, farthermost, utmost, uttermost, last, furthermost, endmost, greatest, most distant; (*adj, adv*) remotest. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) closest, nearest.

forgetfulness: (*n*) neglect, amnesia, obliviousness, inattention, memory loss, omission, unknowingness, unawareness, Lethe, carelessness, loss of memory. ANTONYMS: (*n*) awareness, concentration, remembering, attention.

jacks: (*n*) knucklebones, carangids, Carangidae.

miser: (*n*) stinginess, curmudgeon, hunks, muckworm, niggard, skinflint, cheapskate, parsimony, moneygrubber, Jew, miserliness.

mouldy: (*adj*) moldy, mildewy, fusty, musty, stale, trite, hackneyed, well-worn, putrid, mould, frowsty.

roasting: (*n*) barbecuing, cookery, cooking; (*adj*) broiling, baking, burning, boiling, airless, blazing, close; (*adj, n*) scorching. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) airy, fresh.

simpleton: (*n*) fool, blockhead, dolt, dunce, numskull, ninny, nincompoop, booby, sap, dummy, dullard.

unfastened: (*adj*) open, movable, loose, unbuttoned, overt, opened, opened out, slack, undecided, undetermined, assailable. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) buttoned, fixed, shut, tied.

certainty. A dull mind, once arriving at an inference that flatters a desire, is rarely able to retain the impression that the notion from which the inference started was purely problematic. And Dunstan's mind was as dull as the mind of a possible **felon** usually is. There were only three hiding-places where he had ever heard of cottagers' hoards being found: the **thatch**, the bed, and a hole in the floor. Marner's cottage had no thatch; and Dunstan's first act, after a train of thought made rapid by the stimulus of cupidity, was to go up to the bed; but while he did so, his eyes travelled eagerly over the floor, where the **bricks**, distinct in the fire-light, were **discernible** under the **sprinkling** of sand. But not everywhere; for there was one spot, and one only, which was quite covered with sand, and sand showing the marks of fingers, which had apparently been careful to spread it over a given space. It was near the treddles of the loom. In an instant Dunstan darted to that spot, swept away the sand with his whip, and, inserting the thin end of the hook between the bricks, found that they were loose. In **haste** he lifted up two bricks, and saw what he had no doubt was the object of his search; for what could there be but money in those two leathern bags? And, from their weight, they must be filled with guineas. Dunstan felt round the hole, to be certain that it held no more; then hastily replaced the bricks, and spread the sand over them. Hardly more than five minutes had passed since he entered the cottage, but it seemed to Dunstan like a long while; and though he was without any distinct recognition of the possibility that Marner might be alive, and might **re**-enter the cottage at any moment, he felt an **undefinable** dread laying hold on him, as he rose to his feet with the bags in his hand. He would **hasten** out into the darkness, and then consider what he should do with the bags. He closed the door behind him immediately, that he might shut in the stream of light: a few steps would be enough to carry him beyond betrayal by the gleams from the shutter-chinks and the latch-hole. The rain and darkness had got thicker, and he was glad of it; though it was awkward walking with both hands filled, so that it was as much as he could do to grasp his whip along with one of the bags. But when he had gone a yard or two, he might take his time. So he stepped forward into the darkness.

Thesaurus

bricks: (*n*) walk, highway.
discernible: (*adj*) observable, apparent, visible, appreciable, conspicuous, detectable, evident, noticeable, obvious, audible, palpable. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) indiscernible, unrecognizable, indistinguishable, obscure, obscured, unnoticeable, invisible, undetectable.
felon: (*n*) convict, culprit, crook, malefactor, thug, desperado, miscreant, offender, hoodlum, outlaw; (*adj*) felonious.
haste: (*n, v*) hurry, dash, dispatch, rush; (*n*) celerity, expedition, rapidity, speed, bustle, hastiness, quickness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) delay, patience, forethought, caution.
hasten: (*adj, n, v*) speed, quicken; (*v*) expedite, advance, hurry, hie, dash, rush; (*n, v*) further, forward, dispatch. ANTONYMS: (*v*) linger, retard, amble.
re-enter: (*v*) return, come back.
sprinkling: (*n*) sprinkle, scattering, touch, aspersion, smack, spray, bit, scatter, watering; (*adj, n*) spice; (*adj*) drop.
thatch: (*n*) thatching, roof, Edward thatch, teach, ceiling, Blackbeard, tile, sea rover, roofing material, sea robber, hair.
undefinable: (*adj*) undefined, inexpressible, indescribable, vague, inexplicable, ineffable, incommunicable.

CHAPTER V

When Dunstan Cass turned his back on the cottage, Silas Marner was not more than a hundred yards away from it, **plodding** along from the village with a sack thrown round his shoulders as an **overcoat**, and with a horn lantern in his hand. His legs were weary, but his mind was at ease, free from the **presentiment** of change. The sense of security more frequently springs from habit than from conviction, and for this reason it often subsists after such a change in the conditions as might have been expected to suggest alarm. The lapse of time during which a given event has not happened, is, in this logic of habit, constantly alleged as a reason why the event should never happen, even when the lapse of time is precisely the added condition which makes the event imminent. A man will tell you that he has worked in a mine for forty years **unhurt** by an accident as a reason why he should **apprehend** no danger, though the roof is beginning to sink; and it is often observable, that the older a man gets, the more difficult it is to him to retain a believing conception of his own death. This influence of habit was necessarily strong in a man whose life was so monotonous as Marner's--who saw no new people and heard of no new events to keep alive in him the idea of the unexpected and the **changeful**; and it explains simply enough, why his mind could be at ease, though he had left his house and his treasure more **defenceless** than usual. Silas was thinking with double complacency of his supper: first, because it would be hot and **savoury**; and secondly, because it

Thesaurus

apprehend: (*v*) arrest, comprehend, grasp, catch, understand, fathom, realize, sense, follow, nail; (*adj, v*) conceive. ANTONYMS: (*v*) misunderstand, discharge, free, liberate.

changeful: (*adj*) fluid, fickle, capricious, astatic, variable, volatile, unstable, mercurial, mobile, unsettled, erratic.

defenceless: (*adj*) unarmed, vulnerable, helpless, naked, undefended, unguarded, unprotected.

overcoat: (*n*) greatcoat, coat, cloak, robe, topcoat, surcoat, coating, overcoating, capote, chesterfield, gown.

plodding: (*adj*) slow, stodgy, heavy, hardworking, ponderous, steady; (*n*) persistence, grind, donkeywork, drudgery, walking. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) dilettante, rapid.

presentiment: (*n*) premonition, hunch, apprehension, feeling, foreboding, anticipation, intuition, boding, suspicion; (*v*) augury; (*n, v*) omen.

savoury: (*adj*) piquant, dainty, appetizing, peppery, spicy, luscious, zesty, tasty, inoffensive, juicy, gingery.

unhurt: (*adj, v*) uninjured, unbroken; (*adj*) safe, untouched, intact, unscathed, whole, safe and sound, sound; (*v*) unmarred, unsinged. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) hurt, injured.

would cost him nothing. For the little bit of pork was a present from that excellent housewife, Miss Priscilla Lammeter, to whom he had this day carried home a handsome piece of linen; and it was only on occasion of a present like this, that Silas indulged himself with roast-meat. Supper was his favourite meal, because it came at his time of revelry, when his heart warmed over his gold; whenever he had roast-meat, he always chose to have it for supper. But this evening, he had no sooner **ingeniously knotted** his string fast round his bit of pork, twisted the string according to rule over his door-key, passed it through the handle, and made it fast on the **hanger**, than he remembered that a piece of very fine **twine** was indispensable to his "setting up" a new piece of work in his loom early in the morning. It had slipped his memory, because, in coming from Mr. Lammeter's, he had not had to pass through the village; but to lose time by going on **errands** in the morning was out of the question. It was a nasty fog to turn out into, but there were things Silas loved better than his own comfort; so, drawing his pork to the extremity of the hanger, and **arming** himself with his lantern and his old sack, he set out on what, in ordinary weather, would have been a twenty minutes' errand. He could not have locked his door without **undoing** his well-knotted string and **retarding** his supper; it was not worth his while to make that sacrifice. What thief would find his way to the Stone-pits on such a night as this? and why should he come on this particular night, when he had never come through all the fifteen years before? These questions were not distinctly present in Silas's mind; they merely serve to represent the vaguely-felt foundation of his freedom from anxiety.

He reached his door in much satisfaction that his errand was done: he opened it, and to his short-sighted eyes everything remained as he had left it, except that the fire sent out a welcome increase of heat. He trod about the floor while putting by his lantern and throwing aside his hat and sack, so as to merge the marks of Dunstan's feet on the sand in the marks of his own nailed boots. Then he moved his pork nearer to the fire, and sat down to the agreeable business of tending the meat and warming himself at the same time.

Thesaurus

arming: (*n*) arms, militarisation, mobilization, militarization, mobilisation, armed, outfitting, equipping.
errand: (*n*) chore, mission, job, task, assignment, embassy, duty, charge, messenger, communication, work.
errands: (*n*) everyday Jobs, farm duties.
hanger: (*n*) strap, hook, dropper, suspension, support, coat hanger, rack, hangman, suspender, peg, dowel.
ingeniously: (*adv*) artfully, cleverly, adroitly, skillfully, inventively, resourcefully, shrewdly, imaginatively, cunningly, craftily, artistically. ANTONYM: (*adv*) ineptly.
knotted: (*adj*) knotty, gnarled, gnarly, involved, entangled, complicated, tangled, matted, knobbed, fastened; (*adj, v*) kinky. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) straight, tidy, relaxed.
retarding: (*n*) delay, let, hindrance, impediment, obstacle; (*adj*) ritardando.
twine: (*n, v*) coil; (*n*) string, rope, cord; (*v*) lace, entwine, enlace, meander, weave, intertwine, twist. ANTONYMS: (*v*) untwine, straighten, unwind.
undoing: (*n*) ruin, destruction, loss, curse, cancellation, reverse, bane, doom, collapse, annulment, disaster. ANTONYMS: (*n*) building, creation.

Any one who had looked at him as the red light shone upon his pale face, strange straining eyes, and meagre form, would perhaps have understood the mixture of contemptuous pity, dread, and suspicion with which he was regarded by his neighbours in Raveloe. Yet few men could be more harmless than poor Marner. In his truthful simple soul, not even the growing greed and worship of gold could **beget** any vice directly **injurious** to others. The light of his faith quite put out, and his **affections** made **desolate**, he had clung with all the force of his nature to his work and his money; and like all objects to which a man devotes himself, they had **fashioned** him into correspondence with themselves. His loom, as he wrought in it without **ceasing**, had in its turn wrought on him, and confirmed more and more the monotonous **craving** for its monotonous response. His gold, as he hung over it and saw it grow, gathered his power of loving together into a hard isolation like its own.

As soon as he was warm he began to think it would be a long while to wait till after supper before he drew out his guineas, and it would be pleasant to see them on the table before him as he ate his unwonted feast. For joy is the best of wine, and Silas's guineas were a golden wine of that sort.

He rose and placed his candle **unsuspectingly** on the floor near his loom, swept away the sand without noticing any change, and removed the bricks. The sight of the empty hole made his heart leap violently, but the belief that his gold was gone could not come at once--only terror, and the eager effort to put an end to the terror. He passed his trembling hand all about the hole, trying to think it possible that his eyes had deceived him; then he held the candle in the hole and examined it curiously, trembling more and more. At last he shook so violently that he let fall the candle, and lifted his hands to his head, trying to steady himself, that he might think. Had he put his gold somewhere else, by a sudden resolution last night, and then forgotten it? A man falling into dark waters seeks a momentary footing even on sliding stones; and Silas, by acting as if he believed in false hopes, warded off the moment of despair. He searched in every corner, he turned his bed over, and shook it, and kneaded it; he looked in his brick oven where he laid his sticks. When there was no other place to be searched, he

Thesaurus

affections: (*n*) bosom.
beget: (*v*) father, engender, generate, get, produce, procreate, create, sire, cause, breed, bring about. ANTONYMS: (*v*) extinguish, destroy.
ceasing: (*n*) stopping, subsidence.
craving: (*n*) appetite, addiction, appetence, eagerness, hankering, yen, hunger; (*n, v*) desire, appetency; (*adj, n*) longing; (*adj*) eager. ANTONYMS: (*n*) disgust, hatred, distaste, repulsion, aversion, apathy, disinclination; (*adj*) unconcerned, disinterested.
desolate: (*adj, v*) desert, forlorn; (*adj*) bare, barren, alone, bleak, deserted, cheerless, disconsolate; (*v*) devastate, destroy. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) cheerful, inhabited, happy, sheltered, mobbed, overcrowded, ecstatic, hopeful; (*v*) create, construct, build.
fashioned: (*adj*) formed, featured, fictitious, intentional, bent, wrought.
injurious: (*adj*) evil, harmful, hurtful, destructive, bad, disadvantageous, detrimental, adverse, deleterious, inimical, damaging. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) healing, favorable, healthy, helpful, advantageous, beneficial.
unsuspectingly: (*adv*) innocently, trustingly, naively, unconsciously, credulously, unwittingly, confidingly, unwarily, without knowing, accidentally, unintentionally. ANTONYM: (*adv*) deliberately.

kneeled down again and felt once more all round the hole. There was no **untried** refuge left for a moment's shelter from the terrible truth.

Yes, there was a sort of refuge which always comes with the **prostration** of thought under an **overpowering** passion: it was that expectation of impossibilities, that belief in contradictory images, which is still distinct from madness, because it is capable of being **dissipated** by the external fact. Silas got up from his knees trembling, and looked round at the table: didn't the gold lie there after all? The table was bare. Then he turned and looked behind him--looked all round his dwelling, seeming to strain his brown eyes after some possible appearance of the bags where he had already sought them in vain. He could see every object in his cottage-- and his gold was not there.

Again he put his trembling hands to his head, and gave a wild ringing scream, the cry of desolation. For a few moments after, he stood motionless; but the cry had relieved him from the first **maddening** pressure of the truth. He turned, and tottered towards his loom, and got into the seat where he worked, instinctively seeking this as the strongest assurance of reality.

And now that all the false hopes had vanished, and the first shock of certainty was past, the idea of a thief began to present itself, and he entertained it eagerly, because a thief might be caught and made to restore the gold. The thought brought some new strength with it, and he started from his loom to the door. As he opened it the rain beat in upon him, for it was falling more and more heavily. There were no footsteps to be tracked on such a night--footsteps? When had the thief come? During Silas's absence in the daytime the door had been locked, and there had been no marks of any **inroad** on his return by daylight. And in the evening, too, he said to himself, everything was the same as when he had left it. The sand and bricks looked as if they had not been moved. *Was* it a thief who had taken the bags? or was it a cruel power that no hands could reach, which had delighted in making him a second time desolate? He shrank from this vaguer dread, and fixed his mind with struggling effort on the **robber** with hands, who could be reached by hands. His thoughts glanced at all the neighbours who had made any remarks, or asked any questions which he

Thesaurus

dissipated: (*adj, v*) fast; (*adj*) dissolute, immoral, abandoned, profligate, prodigal, gay, rakish, degenerate, squandered, licentious. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) upright, moral.

inroad: (*n*) foray, attack, incursion, invasion, aggression, penetration, offence, influx, intrusion; (*n, v*) raid; (*v*) invade.

maddening: (*adj*) exasperating, annoying, aggravating, irritating, galling, trying, vexing, madden, bothersome, crazy, vexatious. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) pleasing, soothing, satisfying.

overpowering: (*adj*) overwhelming, oppressive, resistless, compelling, intense, heavy, strong, onerous, devastating, uncontrollable, depressing. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) light, subtle, imperceptible, insignificant, shallow, weak, faint, bland.

prostration: (*n*) depression, exhaustion, kneeling, breakdown, weakness, dejection, inanition, genuflexion, curtsy; (*adj*) decline; (*adj, n*) syncope.

robber: (*n*) highwayman, bandit, mugger, outlaw, plunderer, pillager, burglar, pirate, crook, filcher, spoiler.

untried: (*adj*) raw, new, untested, unseasoned, fresh, untrodden, unsalted, young, unverified, untouched; (*v*) undetermined. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) proven, seasoned, familiar, experienced.

might now regard as a ground of suspicion. There was Jem Rodney, a known **poacher**, and otherwise disreputable: he had often met Marner in his journeys across the fields, and had said something **jestingly** about the weaver's money; nay, he had once irritated Marner, by lingering at the fire when he called to light his pipe, instead of going about his business. Jem Rodney was the man--there was ease in the thought. Jem could be found and made to restore the money: Marner did not want to punish him, but only to get back his gold which had gone from him, and left his soul like a forlorn traveller on an unknown desert. The robber must be laid hold of. Marner's ideas of legal authority were confused, but he felt that he must go and proclaim his loss; and the great people in the village--the clergyman, the constable, and Squire Cass--would make Jem Rodney, or somebody else, deliver up the stolen money. He rushed out in the rain, under the stimulus of this hope, forgetting to cover his head, not caring to fasten his door; for he felt as if he had nothing left to lose. He ran swiftly, till want of breath compelled him to **slacken** his pace as he was entering the village at the turning close to the Rainbow.

The Rainbow, in Marner's view, was a place of luxurious resort for rich and stout husbands, whose wives had superfluous stores of linen; it was the place where he was likely to find the powers and dignities of Raveloe, and where he could most speedily make his loss public. He lifted the **latch**, and turned into the bright bar or kitchen on the right hand, where the less lofty customers of the house were in the habit of assembling, the parlour on the left being reserved for the more select society in which Squire Cass frequently enjoyed the double pleasure of **conviviality** and **condescension**. But the parlour was dark to-night, the chief personages who **ornamented** its circle being all at Mrs. Osgood's birthday dance, as Godfrey Cass was. And in consequence of this, the party on the high-screened seats in the kitchen was more numerous than usual; several personages, who would otherwise have been admitted into the parlour and enlarged the opportunity of **hectoring** and condescension for their betters, being content this evening to vary their enjoyment by taking their spirits-and-water where they could themselves hector and **condescend** in company that called for beer.

Thesaurus

condescend: (*adj, v*) deign, vouchsafe; (*v*) stoop, patronize, patronise, descend, lower, interact, decline, bow, agree.
condescension: (*n*) arrogance, lordliness, disparagement, patronage, affability, disdain, pride, superciliousness, contempt, stoop, depreciation. ANTONYMS: (*n*) respect, acceptance, admiration.
conviviality: (*n*) merrymaking, joviality, geniality, hospitality, festivity, jollification, sociability, revelry, celebration, friendliness, mirth. ANTONYMS: (*n*) hostility, shyness, unfriendliness.
hectoring: (*adj*) blustering, vaporing, roistering, crushing, swashing.
jestingly: (*adv*) facetiously, jocularly, jocosely, in jest.
latch: (*v*) bar, fasten, grab; (*n, v*) bolt; (*adj, n, v*) lock; (*n*) hasp, clasp, door latch, hook; (*adj*) link, yoke.
ornamented: (*adj*) embellished, beautified, fancy, flowery, ornate, adorned, bedecked, decked, festooned, feathered, florid.
poacher: (*n*) alligatorfish, scorpaenoid, lurcher, armed bullhead, gormandizer, sea poker, smuggler, glutton, sea poacher.
slacken: (*adj, n, v*) loosen; (*v*) abate, remit, retard, loose, douse, lessen, slow, slack up; (*adj, v*) slack; (*n, v*) ease. ANTONYMS: (*v*) tense, increase.

CHAPTER VI

The conversation, which was at a high pitch of animation when Silas approached the door of the Rainbow, had, as usual, been slow and intermittent when the company first assembled. The **pipes** began to be **puffed** in a silence which had an air of severity; the more important customers, who drank spirits and sat nearest the fire, staring at each other as if a bet were depending on the first man who winked; while the beer-drinkers, chiefly men in **fustian** jackets and smock-frocks, kept their eyelids down and rubbed their hands across their mouths, as if their **draughts** of beer were a **funereal** duty attended with embarrassing sadness. At last Mr. **Snell**, the landlord, a man of a neutral disposition, accustomed to stand aloof from human differences as those of beings who were all alike in need of liquor, broke silence, by saying in a doubtful tone to his cousin the butcher--

"Some folks 'ud say that was a fine beast you druv in yesterday, Bob?"

The butcher, a jolly, smiling, red-haired man, was not disposed to answer **rashly**. He gave a few puffs before he spat and replied, "And they wouldn't be fur wrong, John."

After this feeble **delusive** thaw, the silence set in as severely as before.

"Was it a red Durham?" said the **farrier**, taking up the thread of discourse after the lapse of a few minutes.

Thesaurus

delusive: (*adj*) deceptive, false, misleading, fallacious, untrue, unreal, imaginary, fictitious, delusory, vain, illusory. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) truthful, real, honest, genuine, actual, authentic.
draughts: (*n*) solitaire, go bang, backgammon, misere chess, chess, dominos, board game.
farrier: (*n*) horseshoer; (*v*) cowboy, bull whacker, cow puncher.
funereal: (*adj*) doleful, dismal, dreary, somber, gloomy, melancholy, dolorous, dark, depressing, lugubrious; (*v*) burial. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) cheery, lively, cheerful.
fustian: (*adj, n*) rant, jargon; (*adj*) bombastic, inflated, pompous, grandiloquent, highfalutin, prose run mad; (*n*) claptrap, blah, grandiosity.
pipes: (*n*) musette, tubing, tubes, pipe, tube.
puffed: (*adj*) puff, bloated, distended, puffy, tumid, turgid, swell, breathless, bepuffed, overflowing, out of breath.
rashly: (*adj, adv*) hastily, headlong; (*adv*) thoughtlessly, recklessly, impetuously, imprudently, carelessly, indiscreetly, headily, heedlessly, wildly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) thoughtfully, prudently, late, pensively, sensibly, responsibly, cautiously, deliberately, patiently.
snell: (*adj*) astute; (*n*) branch line, leader.

The farrier looked at the landlord, and the landlord looked at the butcher, as the person who must take the responsibility of answering.

"Red it was," said the butcher, in his good-humoured **husky** treble-- "and a Durham it was."

"Then you needn't tell *me* who you bought it of," said the farrier, looking round with some triumph; "I know who it is has got the red Durhams o' this country-side. And she'd a white star on her brow, I'll bet a penny?" The farrier leaned forward with his hands on his **knees** as he put this question, and his eyes twinkled knowingly.

"Well; yes--she might," said the butcher, slowly, considering that he was giving a decided **affirmative**. "I don't say contrairy."

"I knew that very well," said the farrier, throwing himself backward again, and speaking defiantly; "if *I* don't know Mr. Lammeter's cows, I should like to know who does--that's all. And as for the cow you've bought, bargain or no bargain, I've been at the **drenching** of her--contradick me who will."

The farrier looked fierce, and the mild butcher's conversational spirit was roused a little.

"I'm not for contradicking no man," he said; "I'm for peace and **quietness**. Some are for cutting long ribs--I'm for cutting 'em short myself; but *I* don't quarrel with 'em. All I say is, it's a lovely carkiss--and anybody as was reasonable, it 'ud bring tears into their eyes to look at it."

"Well, it's the cow as I **drenched**, whatever it is," **pursued** the farrier, angrily; "and it was Mr. Lammeter's cow, else you told a lie when you said it was a red Durham."

"I tell no lies," said the butcher, with the same mild **huskiness** as before, "and I contradick none--not if a man was to swear himself black: he's no meat o' mine, nor none o' my bargains. All I say is, it's a lovely carkiss. And what I say, I'll stick to; but I'll quarrel wi' no man."

"No," said the farrier, with bitter sarcasm, looking at the company generally; "and p'rhaps you aren't **pig**-headed; and p'rhaps you didn't say the cow was a

Thesaurus

affirmative: (*adj*) positive, affirmatory, assertive, ratifying, concurring; (*adv*) yes; (*n*) affirmation, avowal, assenting; (*adj, v*) predicatory, declaratory. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) dissenting; (*n*) no.
drenched: (*adj*) saturated, soaked, soaking, damp, soppy, wet through, sodden, sopping, wringing wet, soaked to the skin, dripping wet.
drenching: (*adj, n*) soaking; (*n*) wetting, dipsomaniac, sousing, dip, boozer, alcoholic.
huskiness: (*n*) gruffness, harshness, strength, croakiness, toughness, stridency, ruggedness, roughness, brusqueness, curtness, formidability. ANTONYM: (*n*) smoothness.
husky: (*adj*) hoarse, gruff, burly, big, dry, raucous, beefy, strapping, brawny, sturdy; (*n*) Eskimo dog. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) high, puny, small, smooth, soft.
knees: (*n*) knee.
pig-**headed**: (*adj*) stubborn, obstinate, opinionated, obdurate, perverse, willful, dogged, contumacious, intractable.
pursued: (*n*) hunted person.
quietness: (*n*) quiet, serenity, calm, calmness, peacefulness, repose, hush, composure, quietude, silence, stillness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) volume, disturbance, loudness, bustle, wildness, turbulence, noise, turmoil, brashness, boldness, movement.

red Durham; and p'rhaps you didn't say she'd got a star on her brow--stick to that, now you're at it."

"Come, come," said the landlord; "let the cow alone. The truth lies atween you: you're both right and both wrong, as I allays say. And as for the cow's being Mr. Lammeter's, I say nothing to that; but this I say, as the Rainbow's the Rainbow. And for the matter o' that, if the talk is to be o' the Lammeters, *you* know the most upo' that head, eh, Mr. Macey? You remember when first Mr. Lammeter's father come into these parts, and took the Warrens?"

Mr. Macey, **tailor** and parish-clerk, the latter of which functions rheumatism had of late obliged him to share with a small-featured young man who sat opposite him, held his white head on one side, and twirled his thumbs with an air of **complacency**, slightly **seasoned** with criticism. He smiled **pityingly**, in answer to the landlord's appeal, and said--

"Aye, aye; I know, I know; but I let other folks talk. I've laid by now, and gev up to the young uns. Ask them as have been to school at Tarley: they've learnt pernouncing; that's come up since my day."

"If you're pointing at me, Mr. Macey," said the deputy clerk, with an air of anxious **propriety**, "I'm **nowise** a man to speak out of my place. As the **psalm** says—

> "I know what's right, nor only so,
> But also practise what I know.""

"Well, then, I wish you'd keep hold o' the tune, when it's set for you; if you're for **prac*tis*ing**, I wish you'd prac*tise* that," said a large jocose-looking man, an excellent **wheelwright** in his week-day capacity, but on Sundays leader of the choir. He winked, as he spoke, at two of the company, who were known officially as the "bassoon" and the "key-bugle", in the confidence that he was expressing the sense of the musical profession in Raveloe.

Thesaurus

complacency: (*n*) contentment, conceit, satisfaction, self-satisfaction, comfort, entire satisfaction, peace of mind, gratification; (*adj*) amiability, soft tongue, mansuetude.
nowise: (*adv*) no, nay, noways, not, none, to no degree.
pityingly: (*adv*) sympathetically, pitying, sorrily, with compassion, with pity.
practising: (*adj*) practicing, churchgoing.
propriety: (*adj, n*) decency, modesty, correctness, aptitude; (*n*) decorum, fitness, etiquette, civility, grace, politeness, manners. ANTONYMS: (*n*) impropriety, rudeness, unsuitableness, indecorum, decadence, tactlessness, corruption, vulgarity, indecency.
psalm: (*n*) hymn, chant, psalmody, anthem, song, Salm; (*v*) sing.
seasoned: (*adj*) veteran, flavoured, flavored, mature, ripe, versed, hardened, confirmed, practised, accustomed, sophisticated. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) green, unseasoned, inexperienced, mild.
tailor: (*v*) sew, fashion, shape, accommodate, design, cut, adjust, fit; (*n*) snip, dressmaker, sartor.
wheelwright: (*n*) blacksmith, locksmith, sailmaker, Wright, bicycler, bicyclist, cyclist, sir Mortimer wheeler, wheel horse, sir Robert Eric Mortimer wheeler.

Mr. Tookey, the deputy-clerk, who shared the **unpopularity** common to deputies, turned very red, but replied, with careful moderation-- "Mr. Winthrop, if you'll bring me any proof as I'm in the wrong, I'm not the man to say I won't alter. But there's people set up their own **ears** for a standard, and expect the whole choir to follow 'em. There may be two opinions, I hope."

"Aye, aye," said Mr. Macey, who felt very well satisfied with this attack on youthful presumption; "you're right there, Tookey: there's allays two 'pinions; there's the 'pinion a man has of himsen, and there's the 'pinion other folks have on him. There'd be two 'pinions about a cracked bell, if the bell could hear itself."

"Well, Mr. Macey," said poor Tookey, serious **amidst** the general laughter, "I undertook to partially fill up the office of parish-clerk by Mr. Crackenthorp's desire, whenever your infirmities should make you **unfitting**; and it's one of the rights **thereof** to sing in the choir--else why have you done the same yourself?"

"Ah! but the old gentleman and you are two folks," said Ben Winthrop. "The old gentleman's got a gift. Why, the Squire used to invite him to take a glass, only to hear him sing the "Red Rovier"; didn't he, Mr. Macey? It's a nat'ral gift. There's my little lad Aaron, he's got a gift--he can sing a tune off straight, like a **throstle**. But as for you, Master Tookey, you'd better stick to your "Amens": your voice is well enough when you keep it up in your nose. It's your inside as isn't right made for music: it's no better nor a hollow stalk."

This kind of **unflinching frankness** was the most **piquant** form of joke to the company at the Rainbow, and Ben Winthrop's insult was felt by everybody to have **capped** Mr. Macey's epigram.

"I see what it is plain enough," said Mr. Tookey, unable to keep cool any longer. "There's a consperacy to turn me out o' the choir, as I shouldn't share the Christmas money--that's where it is. But I shall speak to Mr. Crackenthorp; I'll not be put upon by no man."

Thesaurus

amidst: (*adv, prep*) among; (*adv*) amongst; (*prep*) between, midst, into.
capped: (*adj*) crowned.
ears: (*n*) antenna.
frankness: (*n*) honesty, truth, forthrightness, candidness, freedom, sincerity, candour, plainness, bluffness, outspokenness, ingenuousness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) cunning, tact, delicacy, deceit, conformity, reticence, indirectness, evasiveness.
piquant: (*adj*) peppery, spicy, engaging, tasty, salty, strong, sharp, gamy; (*adj, n*) pungent, racy, trenchant. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) bland, dull, insipid, faint.
thereof: (*adv*) thence, therefrom, therefore, hence; (*adj*) casual, intelligence, observer, occasional, prearranged, premeditated, fortuitous.
throstle: (*n*) song thrush, thrush, flyer eye.
unfitting: (*adj*) improper, unsuitable, incorrect, unbecoming, incompatible, out or keeping, unseemly, incongruous, inadequate, unsuited; (*v*) unfit. ANTONYM: (*adj*) suitable.
unflinching: (*adj*) resolute, steadfast, undaunted, firm, unfaltering, determined, dauntless, intrepid, undeviating, constant, unswerving.
unpopularity: (*n*) disrepute, quality, disfavor. ANTONYMS: (*n*) popularity, approval.

"Nay, nay, Tookey," said Ben Winthrop. "We'll pay you your share to keep out of it--that's what we'll do. There's things folks 'ud pay to be rid on, besides varmin."

"Come, come," said the landlord, who felt that paying people for their absence was a principle dangerous to society; "a joke's a joke. We're all good friends here, I hope. We must give and take. You're both right and you're both wrong, as I say. I agree wi' Mr. Macey here, as there's two opinions; and if mine was asked, I should say they're both right. Tookey's right and Winthrop's right, and they've only got to split the difference and make themselves even."

The farrier was **puffing** his pipe rather fiercely, in some contempt at this trivial discussion. He had no ear for music himself, and never went to church, as being of the medical profession, and likely to be in **requisition** for delicate cows. But the butcher, having music in his soul, had listened with a divided desire for Tookey's defeat and for the preservation of the peace.

"To be sure," he said, following up the landlord's **conciliatory** view, "we're fond of our old clerk; it's nat'ral, and him used to be such a singer, and got a brother as is known for the first **fiddler** in this country-side. Eh, it's a pity but what Solomon lived in our village, and could give us a tune when we liked; eh, Mr. Macey? I'd keep him in liver and lights for nothing--that I would."

"Aye, aye," said Mr. Macey, in the height of complacency; "our family's been known for musicianers as far back as anybody can tell. But them things are dying out, as I tell Solomon every time he comes round; there's no **voices** like what there used to be, and there's nobody remembers what we remember, if it isn't the old crows."

"Aye, you remember when first Mr. Lammeter's father come into these parts, don't you, Mr. Macey?" said the landlord.

"I should think I did," said the old man, who had now gone through that **complimentary** process necessary to bring him up to the point of **narration**; "and a fine old gentleman he was--as fine, and finer nor the Mr. Lammeter as now is. He came from a bit north'ard, so far as I could ever make out. But there's

Thesaurus

complimentary: (*adj, adv*) free, gratis, without charge, at no cost; (*adj*) gratuitous, adulatory, flattering, costless, approving, on the house; (*v*) commendatory. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) disparaging, offensive, disapproving, critical, uncomplimentary, derogatory, denouncing, negative, costly, scornful, unflattering.

conciliatory: (*adj*) complaisant, pacific, mollifying, propitiatory, friendly, appeasing, conciliating, compromising, pacificatory, assuaging, quiet. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) provocative, challenging, hostile, aggressive, stubborn, bellicose, belligerent, fighting, antagonizing, uncompromising, antagonistic.

fiddler: (*n*) Fiddler's money, trumpeter, fifer, instrumentalist, musician, player, piper, violin player, twiddler, tinkerer, drummer.

narration: (*n*) description, recital, narrative, explanation, history, tale, report, relation, story, recitation, rehearsal.

puffing: (*adj*) gasping, breathless, panting, bloated, bouffant, breathing heavily, out of breath, distended, puffed; (*n*) expansion, snorting.

requisition: (*n, v*) request, claim, command; (*v*) commandeer, call, require, exact; (*n*) application, requirement, order, exaction. ANTONYMS: (*v*) supply, restore.

voices: (*n*) chorus.

nobody rightly knows about those parts: only it couldn't be far north'ard, nor much different from this country, for he brought a fine breed o' sheep with him, so there must be pastures there, and everything reasonable. We heared tell as he'd sold his own land to come and take the Warrens, and that seemed odd for a man as had land of his own, to come and rent a farm in a strange place. But they said it was along of his wife's dying; **though** there's reasons in things as nobody knows on--that's pretty much what I've made out; yet some folks are so wise, they'll find you fifty reasons straight off, and all the while the real reason's winking at 'em in the corner, and they niver see't. Howsomever, it was soon seen as we'd got a new parish'ner as know'd the rights and customs o' things, and kep a good house, and was well looked on by everybody. And the young man-- that's the Mr. Lammeter as now is, for he'd niver a sister-- soon begun to court Miss Osgood, that's the sister o' the Mr. Osgood as now is, and a fine handsome **lass** she was--eh, you can't think-- they pretend this young lass is like her, but that's the way wi' people as don't know what come before 'em. *I* should know, for I **helped** the old **rector**, Mr. Drumlow as was, I helped him marry 'em."

Here Mr. Macey paused; he always gave his **narrative** in instalments, expecting to be questioned according to precedent.

"Aye, and a partic'lar thing happened, didn't it, Mr. Macey, so as you were likely to remember that marriage?" said the landlord, in a **congratulatory** tone.

"I should think there did--a *very* partic'lar thing," said Mr. Macey, nodding **sideways**. "For Mr. Drumlow--poor old gentleman, I was fond on him, though he'd got a bit confused in his head, what wi' age and wi' taking a drop o' summat warm when the service come of a cold morning. And young Mr. Lammeter, he'd have no way but he must be married in Janiwary, which, to be sure, 's a unreasonable time to be married in, for it isn't like a **christening** or a **burying**, as you can't help; and so Mr. Drumlow--poor old gentleman, I was fond on him--but when he come to put the questions, he put 'em by the rule o' contrairy, like, and he says, "Wilt thou have this man to thy **wedded** wife?" says he, and then he says, "Wilt thou have this woman to thy wedded husband?"

Thesaurus

burying: (*n*) entombment, inhumation.
christening: (*n*) naming, denomination, chrism, designation, identification.
congratulatory: (*adj*) gratulatory, festive, congratulant, triumphant, prideful, glowing, fulsome, admiring, felicitous, commemorative, appreciative.
helped: (*adj*) aided, assisted; (*v*) HALP.
lass: (*n*) girl, lassie, damsel, young woman, young girl, fille, miss, Jeune fille, bobbysocker, bobbysoxer, woman.
narrative: (*n, v*) history, tale; (*n*) account, story, chronicle, legend, yarn, recital, relation, report, anecdote.
rector: (*n*) minister, pastor, president, manager, principal, governor, clergyman, curate, parson, director, priest.
sideways: (*adj*) side, crabwise, crosswise, indirect; (*adv*) obliquely, laterally, sidelong, sideway, sidewise, sidewards; (*adj, adv*) aslant. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) level, direct; (*adv*) across.
thou: (*n*) chiliad, grand, m, g, one thousand, gramme, gram, gm, gigabyte, Gb, curtilage.
wedded: (*adj, v*) marital, connubial, matrimonial, conjugal, wed; (*adj*) nuptial, bridal. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) unmarried, unattached.

says he. But the partic'larest thing of all is, as nobody took any notice on it but me, and they answered straight off "yes", like as if it had been me saying "Amen" i' the right place, without listening to what went before."

"But *you* knew what was going on well enough, didn't you, Mr. Macey? You were live enough, eh?" said the butcher.

"Lor bless you!" said Mr. Macey, pausing, and smiling in pity at the **impotence** of his hearer's imagination--"why, I was all of a **tremble**: it was as if I'd been a coat pulled by the two **tails**, like; for I couldn't stop the parson, I couldn't take upon me to do that; and yet I said to myself, I says, "Suppose they shouldn't be fast married, 'cause the words are contrairy?" and my head went working like a mill, for I was allays uncommon for turning things over and seeing all round 'em; and I says to myself, "Is't the meanin' or the words as makes folks fast i' wedlock?" For the parson meant right, and the bride and **bridegroom** meant right. But then, when I come to think on it, meanin' goes but a little way i' most things, for you may mean to stick things together and your glue may be bad, and then where are you? And so I says to mysen, "It isn't the meanin', it's the glue." And I was worreted as if I'd got three bells to pull at once, when we went into the **vestry**, and they begun to sign their **names**. But where's the use o' talking?--you can't think what goes on in a 'cute man's inside."

"But you held in for all that, didn't you, Mr. Macey?" said the landlord.

"Aye, I held in tight till I was by mysen wi' Mr. Drumlow, and then I out wi' everything, but **respectful**, as I allays did. And he made light on it, and he says, "Pooh, pooh, Macey, make yourself easy," he says; "it's neither the meaning nor the words--it's the re*ges*ter does it--that's the glue." So you see he settled it easy; for parsons and doctors know everything by heart, like, so as they aren't worreted wi' thinking what's the rights and **wrongs** o' things, as I'n been many and many's the time. And sure enough the wedding turned out all right, on'y poor Mrs. Lammeter--that's Miss Osgood as was--died **afore** the lasses was growed up; but for prosperity and everything respectable, there's no family more looked on."

Thesaurus

afore: (*adv*) ahead, along, before, forwards, formerly, beforehand, previously; (*adj*) erewhile, aforehand, theretofore, preceding.
bridegroom: (*v*) bride; (*n*) honeymooner, newlywed, participant, fiance, husband. ANTONYM: (*n*) wife.
impotence: (*n*) weakness, inability, feebleness, debility, impuissance, powerlessness, impotency, erectile dysfunction, infertility, quality, imbecility.
names: (*n*) calumny, defamation, hatchet job.
respectful: (*adj*) deferential, mannerly, dutiful, courteous, attentive, obedient, reverential, regardful, reverent, polite, humble. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) cheeky, impudent, insolent, rude, contemptuous, disobedient, scornful, nasty, sneering, irreverent, impolite.
tails: (*n*) dress suit, tail coat, full dress, tail, waste, evening dress, dress coat, coat, morning coat, cutaway, formalwear.
tremble: (*adj, n, v*) shiver; (*n, v*) quiver, shudder, thrill, palpitate; (*adj, v*) totter, quake; (*n*) throb; (*v*) flutter, quail, falter. ANTONYMS: (*v*) steady, calm.
vestry: (*n*) nave, quire, convocation, consistory, synod, choir, chapter, chancel, transept, aisle, conclave.
wrongs: (*n*) mala.

Every one of Mr. Macey's audience had heard this story many times, but it was listened to as if it had been a favourite tune, and at certain points the puffing of the pipes was **momentarily** suspended, that the **listeners** might give their whole minds to the expected words. But there was more to come; and Mr. Snell, the landlord, duly put the leading question.

"Why, old Mr. Lammeter had a pretty fortin, didn't they say, when he come into these parts?"

"Well, yes," said Mr. Macey; "but I daresay it's as much as this Mr. Lammeter's done to keep it whole. For there was allays a talk as nobody could get rich on the Warrens: though he holds it cheap, for it's what they call Charity Land."

"Aye, and there's few folks know so well as you how it come to be Charity Land, eh, Mr. Macey?" said the **butcher**.

"How should they?" said the old clerk, with some contempt. "Why, my grandfather made the grooms' **livery** for that Mr. **Cliff** as came and built the big stables at the Warrens. Why, they're stables four times as big as Squire Cass's, for he thought o' nothing but hosses and hunting, Cliff didn't--a Lunnon tailor, some folks said, as had gone mad wi' cheating. For he couldn't ride; lor bless you! they said he'd got no more grip o' the hoss than if his legs had been cross-sticks: my grandfather heared old Squire Cass say so many and many a time. But ride he would, as if Old Harry had been a-driving him; and he'd a son, a lad o' sixteen; and nothing would his father have him do, but he must ride and ride--though the lad was frighted, they said. And it was a common saying as the father wanted to ride the tailor out o' the lad, and make a gentleman on him--not but what I'm a tailor myself, but in respect as God made me such, I'm proud on it, for "Macey, tailor", 's been wrote up over our door since afore the Queen's heads went out on the shillings. But Cliff, he was ashamed o' being called a tailor, and he was **sore** vexed as his riding was laughed at, and nobody o' the gentlefolks hereabout could **abide** him. Howsomever, the poor lad got **sickly** and died, and the father didn't live long after him, for he got queerer nor ever, and they said he used to go out i' the dead o' the night, wi' a lantern in his hand,

Thesaurus

abide: (*v*) endure, bide, undergo, tolerate, take, suffer, stomach, bear, brook; (*adj, v*) stay, dwell. ANTONYMS: (*v*) check, depart, disallow, disapprove, disbelieve, journey, dodge, leave, migrate, move, pass.

butcher: (*v*) slaughter, kill, murder, slay; (*n, v*) massacre, botch; (*n*) assassin, bungler, slaughterer, meatman, murderer. ANTONYMS: (*v*) develop, create, grow, build.

cliff: (*adj, n*) precipice; (*n*) boulder, hill, escarpment, promontory, crag, mountain, bank, face; (*adj*) wall, pike.

listeners: (*n*) listener, viewers, spectators, addressees.

livery: (*adj*) liverish, bilious; (*n*) clothing, accouterment, uniform, complexion, legal transfer, color, hue, dye, bailment.

momentarily: (*adv*) transitorily, temporarily, momently, transiently, passingly, ephemerally, fugitively, provisionally, briefly, cursorily, in a moment. ANTONYM: (*adv*) slowly.

sickly: (*adj, adv*) poorly; (*n*) invalid; (*adj*) sick, ailing, pale, sallow, indisposed, morbid, diseased; (*adj, n, v*) infirm; (*adj, v*) faint. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) healthy, bitter, robust.

sore: (*adj, n, v*) hurt; (*adj*) sensitive, angry, grievous, raw; (*n*) injury, lesion, cut, boil; (*v*) acute; (*adj, v*) sharp. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) happy, healthy, pleased, comfortable.

to the stables, and set a lot o' lights burning, for he got as he couldn't sleep; and there he'd stand, **cracking** his whip and looking at his hosses; and they said it was a mercy as the stables didn't get burnt down wi' the poor dumb creaturs in 'em. But at last he died **raving**, and they found as he'd left all his property, Warrens and all, to a Lunnon Charity, and that's how the Warrens come to be Charity Land; though, as for the stables, Mr. Lammeter never uses 'em--they're out o' all charicter-- lor bless you! if you was to set the doors a-banging in 'em, it 'ud sound like thunder half o'er the parish."

"Aye, but there's more going on in the stables than what folks see by daylight, eh, Mr. Macey?" said the landlord.

"Aye, aye; go that way of a dark night, that's all," said Mr. Macey, winking **mysteriously**, "and then make believe, if you like, as you didn't see lights i' the stables, nor hear the **stamping** o' the hosses, nor the cracking o' the whips, and **howling**, too, if it's tow'rt **daybreak**. "Cliff's Holiday" has been the name of it ever sin' I were a boy; that's to say, some said as it was the holiday Old Harry gev him from roasting, like. That's what my father told me, and he was a reasonable man, though there's folks nowadays know what happened afore they were born better nor they know their own business."

"What do you say to that, eh, Dowlas?" said the landlord, turning to the farrier, who was **swelling** with impatience for his cue. "There's a nut for *you* to crack."

Mr. Dowlas was the negative spirit in the company, and was proud of his position.

"Say? I say what a man *should* say as doesn't shut his eyes to look at a finger-post. I say, as I'm ready to **wager** any man ten pound, if he'll stand out wi' me any dry night in the **pasture** before the Warren stables, as we shall neither see lights nor hear noises, if it isn't the blowing of our own noses. That's what I say, and I've said it many a time; but there's nobody 'ull ventur a ten-pun' note on their ghos'es as they make so sure of."

Thesaurus

cracking: (*n*) crack, break, fracture; (*adj*) splitting, swell, smashing, corking, bully, great, keen, neat. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) smooth, slow.
daybreak: (*adj, n*) break of day; (*n*) sunrise, prime, morning, light, dawning, cockcrow, dayspring, aurora, sunup, daylight. ANTONYMS: (*n*) sunset, sundown, darkness, eventide, nightfall.
howling: (*n*) howl, cry; (*adj*) fierce, fantastic, gross, glaring, marvelous, wonderful, wondrous; (*adj, n*) weeping, sniveling.
mysteriously: (*adv*) enigmatically, strangely, obscurely, secretly, uncannily, mystically, darkly, puzzlingly, weirdly, abstrusely, occultly. ANTONYM: (*adv*) normally.
pasture: (*v*) graze, browse, crop; (*n*) grass, grazing land, pasturage, field, ley, lea; (*n, v*) feed, forage.
raving: (*adj, v*) wild; (*adj*) frantic, delirious, furious, mad, insane; (*adj, n*) madness, distraction, rage; (*n*) rabid, delirium.
stamping: (*n*) impression, blocking, coin, postage, stamping of rail.
swelling: (*n*) protuberance, lump, swell, intumescence, growth, projection, prominence, bulge, dropsy; (*adj, v*) inflated; (*adj*) growing. ANTONYM: (*n*) decline.
wager: (*n, v*) stake, hazard, risk, venture, gamble, chance; (*v*) lay, pledge, pawn, play; (*n*) stakes.

"Why, Dowlas, that's easy betting, that is," said Ben Winthrop. "You might as well bet a man as he wouldn't catch the rheumatise if he stood up to 's neck in the pool of a **frosty** night. It 'ud be fine fun for a man to win his bet as he'd catch the rheumatise. Folks as believe in Cliff's Holiday aren't **agoing** to ventur near it for a matter o' ten pound."

"If Master Dowlas wants to know the truth on it," said Mr. Macey, with a **sarcastic** smile, **tapping** his thumbs together, "he's no call to lay any bet--let him go and stan' by himself--there's nobody 'ull **hinder** him; and then he can let the parish'ners know if they're wrong."

"Thank you! I'm obliged to you," said the farrier, with a **snort** of scorn. "If folks are fools, it's no business o' mine. *I* don't want to make out the truth about ghos'es: I know it a'ready. But I'm not against a bet--everything fair and open. Let any man bet me ten pound as I shall see Cliff's Holiday, and I'll go and stand by myself. I want no company. I'd as **lief** do it as I'd fill this pipe."

"Ah, but who's to watch you, Dowlas, and see you do it? That's no fair bet," said the butcher.

"No fair bet?" replied Mr. Dowlas, angrily. "I should like to hear any man stand up and say I want to bet unfair. Come now, Master Lundy, I should like to hear you say it."

"Very like you would," said the butcher. "But it's no business o' mine. You're none o' my bargains, and I aren't a-going to try and 'bate your price. If anybody 'll bid for you at your own vallying, let him. I'm for peace and quietness, I am."

"Yes, that's what every yapping cur is, when you hold a stick up at him," said the farrier. "But I'm afraid o' **neither** man nor ghost, and I'm ready to lay a fair bet. *I* aren't a turn-tail cur."

"Aye, but there's this in it, Dowlas," said the landlord, speaking in a tone of much **candour** and tolerance. "There's folks, i' my opinion, they can't see ghos'es, not if they stood as plain as a pike-staff before 'em. And there's reason i' that. For there's my wife, now, can't smell, not if she'd the strongest o' cheese

Thesaurus

agoing: (*adv*) agate, afoot; (*v*) set on foot, set up.
candour: (*n*) candidness, frankness, forthrightness, fairness, rectitude, purity, straightforwardness, equity, truth, sincerity, simplicity.
frosty: (*adj, v*) icy, glacial; (*adj*) frigid, freezing, wintry, arctic, chill, frozen, chilly, bleak, cool. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) friendly, pleasant, hot, torrid, tropical, balmy, approachable.
hinder: (*v*) impede, resist, check, hamper, obstruct, curb, handicap, delay; (*n, v*) bar; (*adj*) posterior, hind. ANTONYMS: (*v*) help, facilitate, assist, prompt, encourage, promote, allow, support, accelerate.
lief: (*adj, v*) leef; (*adv*) fain, willingly; (*adj*) glad, acceptable.
neither: (*conj*) either, no-one, not either, nor, nother.
sarcastic: (*adj*) sharp, poignant, caustic, bitter, biting, pungent, acid, acrimonious, ironical; (*adj, v*) derisive, satirical. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) sympathetic, pleasant, approving, kind, complimentary, mild, respectful.
snort: (*v*) snore, huff, inhale; (*n, v*) snicker, hoot, chuckle, sneer; (*n*) bird, Bronx cheer, boo, razzing. ANTONYM: (*v*) exhale.
tapping: (*n*) draining of the furnace, paracentesis, to tap, tick, tapotement, sound, patter, drainage, clapping, casting, restriking.

under her nose. I never see'd a ghost myself; but then I says to myself, "Very like I haven't got the smell for 'em." I mean, putting a ghost for a smell, or else contrairiways. And so, I'm for holding with both sides; for, as I say, the truth lies between 'em. And if Dowlas was to go and stand, and say he'd never seen a **wink** o' Cliff's Holiday all the night through, I'd back him; and if anybody said as Cliff's Holiday was certain sure, for all that, I'd back *him* too. For the smell's what I go by."

The landlord's **analogical** argument was not well received by the farrier--a man intensely opposed to compromise.

"Tut, tut," he said, setting down his glass with **refreshed** irritation; "what's the smell got to do with it? Did ever a ghost give a man a black eye? That's what I should like to know. If ghos'es want me to believe in 'em, let 'em leave off **skulking** i' the dark and i' **lone** places--let 'em come where there's company and candles."

"As if ghos'es 'ud want to be believed in by anybody so ignirant!" said Mr. Macey, in deep disgust at the farrier's **crass incompetence** to apprehend the conditions of **ghostly** phenomena.

Thesaurus

analogical: (*v*) analogous; (*adj*) similar, figurative, normal; (*adv*) alike.
crass: (*adj*) raw, consummate, uncouth, crude, dense, inelegant, gross, rough, churlish, rank, vulgar. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) sensitive, tactful, kind, nice, delicate, refined, pleasant.
ghostly: (*adj*) uncanny, eerie, weird, spiritual, spectral, ghostlike, supernatural, macabre, phantasmal; (*adj, adv*) ghastly; (*adv*) spectrally. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) tangible, natural.
incompetence: (*n*) inability, inaptitude, inadequacy, disqualification, ineptitude, impotence, ineptness, incompetency, insufficiency, incapability; (*adj*) inefficiency. ANTONYMS: (*n*) efficiency, skill, capability, effectiveness, ability.
lone: (*adj*) forlorn, lonely, only, solitary, individual, single, sole, separate, isolated, one, solo. ANTONYM: (*adj*) attached.
refreshed: (*adj*) invigorated, rejuvenated, reinvigorated, new, novel, revived, impudent, energizing, overbold, energising, clean. ANTONYM: (*adj*) tired.
skulking: (*adj*) surreptitious, stealthy, lurking, hiding, clandestine, backstairs, concealed, cowardly; (*n*) malingering, dodging, evasion.
wink: (*n, v*) twinkle, blink, flash; (*n*) instant, twinkling, trice; (*v*) sparkle, nictitate, flicker, nictate, leer.

CHAPTER VII

Yet the next moment there seemed to be some evidence that ghosts had a more **condescending** disposition than Mr. Macey **attributed** to them; for the pale thin figure of Silas Marner was suddenly seen standing in the warm light, uttering no word, but looking round at the company with his strange **unearthly** eyes. The long pipes gave a simultaneous movement, like the antennae of startled insects, and every man present, not **excepting** even the sceptical farrier, had an impression that he saw, not Silas Marner in the flesh, but an **apparition**; for the door by which Silas had entered was hidden by the high-screened seats, and no one had **noticed** his approach. Mr. Macey, sitting a long way off the ghost, might be supposed to have felt an argumentative triumph, which would tend to **neutralize** his share of the general alarm. Had he not always said that when Silas Marner was in that strange **trance** of his, his soul went loose from his body? Here was the demonstration: nevertheless, on the whole, he would have been as well contented without it. For a few moments there was a dead silence, Marner's want of breath and agitation not allowing him to speak. The landlord, under the habitual sense that he was bound to keep his house open to all company, and confident in the protection of his unbroken neutrality, at last took on himself the task of adjuring the ghost.

"Master Marner," he said, in a conciliatory tone, "what's lacking to you? What's your business here?"

Thesaurus

apparition: (*n*) ghost, phantom, spirit, spectre, hallucination, spook, shade, eidolon, wraith, advent; (*n, v*) vision.
attributed: (*adj*) credited. ANTONYM: (*adj*) unofficial.
condescending: (*adj*) arrogant, snobbish, superior, haughty, gracious, patronizing, supercilious, arch, benign, affable, merciful. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) humble, unassuming, approachable, unpretentious, friendly, admiring, modest, respectful, deferential.
excepting: (*conj, prep*) but, bar; (*n, prep*) except for, exclusive of; (*prep*) aside from, besides, apart from, barring, excluding, with the exception of; (*v*) saving. ANTONYM: (*prep*) including.
neutralize: (*v*) counterbalance, countervail, neutralise, nullify, offset, cancel, undo, annul, negative, antagonize, kill. ANTONYMS: (*v*) aggravate, arm, contaminate.
noticed: (*adj*) noted.
trance: (*adj, n*) ecstasy; (*n, v*) coma, charm; (*n*) fascination, daze, dream, captivation, spell, stupor, obstupefaction; (*v*) capture. ANTONYMS: (*n*) loyalist, reality, alertness.
unearthly: (*adj*) weird, ghostly, uncanny, ethereal, unworldly, preternatural, spectral, eerie, spiritual, strange, heavenly. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) natural, physical, acceptable, normal, human.

"Robbed!" said Silas, **gaspingly**. "I've been robbed! I want the constable--and the Justice--and Squire Cass--and Mr. Crackenthorp."

"Lay hold on him, Jem Rodney," said the landlord, the idea of a ghost **subsiding**; "he's off his head, I doubt. He's wet through."

Jem Rodney was the **outermost** man, and sat conveniently near Marner's standing-place; but he **declined** to give his services.

"Come and lay hold on him yourself, Mr. Snell, if you've a mind," said Jem, rather **sullenly**. "He's been robbed, and murdered too, for what I know," he added, in a muttering tone.

"Jem Rodney!" said Silas, turning and fixing his strange eyes on the suspected man.

"Aye, Master Marner, what do you want wi' me?" said Jem, trembling a little, and **seizing** his drinking-can as a defensive weapon.

"If it was you stole my money," said Silas, **clasping** his hands **entreatingly**, and raising his voice to a cry, "give it me back-- and I won't **meddle** with you. I won't set the constable on you. Give it me back, and I'll let you--I'll let you have a guinea."

"Me stole your money!" said Jem, angrily. "I'll pitch this can at your eye if you talk o' *my* stealing your money."

"Come, come, Master Marner," said the landlord, now rising resolutely, and seizing Marner by the shoulder, "if you've got any information to lay, speak it out sensible, and show as you're in your right mind, if you expect anybody to listen to you. You're as wet as a drownded rat. Sit down and dry yourself, and speak straight forrard."

"Ah, to be sure, man," said the farrier, who began to feel that he had not been quite on a par with himself and the occasion. "Let's have no more staring and screaming, else we'll have you **strapped** for a **madman**. That was why I didn't speak at the first--thinks I, the man's run mad."

Thesaurus

clasping: (*adj*) tendril.
declined: (*adj*) less.
entreatingly: (*adv*) imploringly, suppliantly, pleadingly, importunately.
gaspingly: (*adv*) breathlessly, windedly, puffingly, pursily.
madman: (*n*) bedlamite, maniac, crazy, loony, nut, madcap, looney, loco, sufferer, raver, nutcase.
meddle: (*v*) intervene, interfere, intrude, monkey, interpose, fiddle, pry, dabble, interlope; (*n*) interference; (*adj*) moil. ANTONYM: (*v*) disregard.
outermost: (*adj, adv*) farthest; (*adj*) outmost, extreme, utmost, uttermost, last, outer, outside, external, exterior, furthermost.
seizing: (*v*) seize; (*n*) seizure, clutches, prehension, taking, apprehension, capture, infection; (*adj*) catching, galling, controlling.
strapped: (*adj*) impecunious, poor, penniless, late, poverty-stricken, short of money, impoverished, destitute, insolvent, indigent.
subsiding: (*n*) settling, subsidence, remission, remittal, cave in, sinking; (*adj*) decreasing.
sullenly: (*adv*) sulkily, sourly, grumpily, morosely, moodily, dourly, somberly, peevishly, surly, crossly, petulantly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) graciously, contentedly, gladly, cheerily.

"Aye, aye, make him sit down," said several voices at once, well pleased that the reality of ghosts remained still an open question.

The landlord forced Marner to take off his coat, and then to sit down on a chair aloof from every one else, in the centre of the circle and in the direct rays of the fire. The weaver, too feeble to have any distinct purpose beyond that of getting help to recover his money, submitted **unresistingly**. The **transient fears** of the company were now forgotten in their strong curiosity, and all faces were turned towards Silas, when the landlord, having seated himself again, said--

"Now then, Master Marner, what's this you've got to say--as you've been robbed? Speak out."

"He'd better not say again as it was me robbed him," cried Jem Rodney, hastily. "What could I ha' done with his money? I could as easy steal the parson's **surplice**, and wear it."

"Hold your tongue, Jem, and let's hear what he's got to say," said the landlord. "Now then, Master Marner."

Silas now told his story, under frequent questioning as the mysterious character of the robbery became evident.

This strangely novel situation of opening his trouble to his Raveloe neighbours, of sitting in the warmth of a **hearth** not his own, and feeling the presence of faces and voices which were his nearest promise of help, had doubtless its influence on Marner, in **spite** of his passionate preoccupation with his loss. Our consciousness rarely **registers** the beginning of a growth within us any more than without us: there have been many circulations of the sap before we detect the smallest sign of the bud.

The slight suspicion with which his hearers at first listened to him, gradually **melted** away before the convincing simplicity of his distress: it was impossible for the neighbours to doubt that Marner was telling the truth, not because they were capable of arguing at once from the nature of his statements to the absence of any motive for making them **falsely**, but because, as Mr. Macey observed, "Folks as had the devil to back 'em were not likely to be so mushed" as poor

Thesaurus

falsely: (*adv*) incorrectly, fraudulently, deceptively, dishonestly, wrongly, erroneously, misleadingly, deceitfully, unfaithfully, spuriously, fictitiously. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) honestly, truthfully, faithfully, authentically, correctly, naturally, rightly.
fears: (*n*) worries, uncertainties, doubts, qualms, misgivings.
hearth: (*n*) fire, oven, fireside, stove, chimney, focus, furnace, dwelling, kiln, home, abode.
melted: (*adj*) molten, fluid, liquified, dissolved, liquefied, baked, fluent, touched, limpid, sorry, flowing.
registers: (*n*) archive, chronicles.
spite: (*n*) malice, grudge, hatred, malevolence, rancour, venom, rancor, maliciousness, ill will, animosity; (*n, v*) pique. ANTONYMS: (*v*) please; (*n*) benevolence, goodwill, love, affection, harmony.
surplice: (*n*) robe, Geneva gown frock, gown, pallium.
transient: (*adj*) fleeting, temporary, passing, transitory, fugacious, ephemeral, momentary, temporal, provisional; (*adj, n*) fugitive, vagabond. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) enduring, lasting, immanent, long; (*n*) resident.
unresistingly: (*adv*) inertly, submissively, inactively, meekly, clearly, evidently, fruitfully, openly, pregnantly, significantly.

Silas was. Rather, from the strange fact that the robber had left no traces, and had happened to know the nick of time, utterly incalculable by mortal agents, when Silas would go away from home without **locking** his door, the more probable conclusion seemed to be, that his **disreputable** intimacy in that quarter, if it ever existed, had been broken up, and that, in consequence, this ill turn had been done to Marner by somebody it was quite in vain to set the constable after. Why this **preternatural** felon should be obliged to wait till the door was left **unlocked**, was a question which did not present itself.

"It isn't Jem Rodney as has done this work, Master Marner," said the landlord. "You mustn't be a-casting your eye at poor Jem. There may be a bit of a **reckoning** against Jem for the matter of a hare or so, if anybody was bound to keep their eyes staring open, and niver to wink; but Jem's been a-sitting here drinking his can, like the decentest man i' the parish, since before you left your house, Master Marner, by your own account."

"Aye, aye," said Mr. Macey; "let's have no accusing o' the innicent. That isn't the law. There must be folks to swear again' a man before he can be ta'en up. Let's have no accusing o' the innicent, Master Marner."

Memory was not so utterly **torpid** in Silas that it could not be **awakened** by these words. With a movement of **compunction** as new and strange to him as everything else within the last hour, he started from his chair and went close up to Jem, looking at him as if he wanted to assure himself of the expression in his face.

"I was wrong," he said--"yes, yes--I ought to have thought. There's nothing to witness against you, Jem. Only you'd been into my house oftener than anybody else, and so you came into my head. I don't accuse you--I won't accuse anybody--only," he added, lifting up his hands to his head, and turning away with bewildered misery, "I try--I try to think where my guineas can be."

"Aye, aye, they're gone where it's hot enough to melt 'em, I doubt," said Mr. Macey.

Thesaurus

awakened: (*adj*) excited, aroused, awakens, awoke, interested.
compunction: (*n*) repentance, remorse, contrition, qualm, penance, regret, compassion, rue, scruple, sorrow, guilt. ANTONYMS: (*n*) hardness, indifference, meanness, remorselessness.
disreputable: (*adj, n, v*) discreditable; (*adj*) base, dishonorable, doubtful, sordid, infamous, shameful, dishonourable, dishonest, despicable, notorious. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) honorable, respected, ethical, noble, decent, respectable, sporting, pleasant, admirable, famous, honest.
locking: (*n*) lockup, bolting, interlocking, engagement, cordoning off, closing off, binding, guarding.
preternatural: (*adj*) unearthly, occult, outlandish, miraculous, uncanny, transcendental, extraordinary, abnormal, weird, nonnatural, otherworldly.
reckoning: (*n*) calculation, computation, bill, score, computing, liquidation, clearance; (*n, v*) count, enumeration, account, estimation.
torpid: (*adj*) inactive, sluggish, indolent, dull, slow, dormant, lazy, dead, lifeless, flat, supine. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) energetic, lively.
unlocked: (*adj*) unbarred, unlatched, unbolted, not closed, loose, unsecured, ajar, wide open, unguaranteed.

"Tchuh!" said the farrier. And then he asked, with a cross-examining air, "How much money might there be in the bags, Master Marner?"

"Two hundred and seventy-two pounds, twelve and **sixpence**, last night when I counted it," said Silas, **seating** himself again, with a groan.

"Pooh! why, they'd be none so heavy to carry. Some tramp's been in, that's all; and as for the no footmarks, and the bricks and the sand being all right--why, your eyes are pretty much like a insect's, Master Marner; they're obliged to look so close, you can't see much at a time. It's my opinion as, if I'd been you, or you'd been me--for it comes to the same thing--you wouldn't have thought you'd found everything as you left it. But what I vote is, as two of the sensiblest o' the company should go with you to Master Kench, the constable's--he's ill i' bed, I know that much--and get him to appoint one of us his deppity; for that's the law, and I don't think anybody 'ull take upon him to contradick me there. It isn't much of a walk to Kench's; and then, if it's me as is deppity, I'll go back with you, Master Marner, and examine your premises; and if anybody's got any fault to find with that, I'll thank him to stand up and say it out like a man."

By this pregnant speech the farrier had re-established his self-complacency, and waited with confidence to hear himself named as one of the **superlatively** sensible men.

"Let us see how the night is, though," said the landlord, who also considered himself personally concerned in this proposition. "Why, it **rains** heavy still," he said, returning from the door.

"Well, I'm not the man to be afraid o' the rain," said the farrier. "For it'll look bad when Justice Malam **hears** as respectable men like us had a information laid before 'em and **took** no steps."

The landlord agreed with this view, and after taking the sense of the company, and duly **rehearsing** a small ceremony known in high ecclesiastical life as the *nolo episcopari*, he consented to take on himself the **chill** dignity of going to Kench's. But to the farrier's strong **disgust**, Mr. Macey now started an objection to his **proposing** himself as a deputy-constable; for that **oracular** old gentleman,

Thesaurus

chill: (*adj, v*) cool; (*adj, n*) cold; (*adj*) bleak, icy, chilly, frosty, depressing; (*v*) freeze, dispirit, damp; (*n*) coolness. ANTONYMS: (*adj, v*) warm; (*n*) warmth, warmness; (*v*) encourage, hearten, inspirit, thaw; (*adj*) hot, gregarious, friendly, sociable.

disgust: (*n*) antipathy, aversion, abhorrence, abomination, detestation, dislike, repugnance; (*n, v*) shock, distaste; (*v*) nauseate, displease. ANTONYMS: (*n, v*) delight; (*n*) love, attraction, liking, adoration; (*v*) attract, allure, charm, entice, please.

hears: (*v*) hear.

oracular: (*adj*) prophetic, ambiguous, mystic, cryptic, prophetical, sibylline, mysterious, delphic, obscure, opinionated, dogmatic.

proposing: (*adj*) prosy, proponent, making proposals.

rains: (*n*) wet.

rehearsing: (*n*) rehearsal.

seating: (*n*) room, circle, parterre, parquet, orchestra, service, way, base, footing, housing, stand.

sixpence: (*n*) bender, coin, teston, testern.

superlatively: (*adv*) perfectly, preeminently, excellently, matchlessly, extremely, outstandingly, splendidly, magnificently, consummately, brilliantly, absolutely.

took: (*adj*) taken; (*v*) receive.

claiming to know the law, stated, as a fact delivered to him by his father, that no doctor could be a **constable**.

"And you're a doctor, I reckon, though you're only a cow-doctor-- for a fly's a fly, though it may be a hoss-fly," concluded Mr. Macey, wondering a little at his own "'cuteness".

There was a hot debate upon this, the farrier being of course **indisposed** to **renounce** the quality of doctor, but **contending** that a doctor could be a constable if he liked--the law meant, he needn't be one if he didn't like. Mr. Macey thought this was nonsense, since the law was not likely to be fonder of doctors than of other folks. Moreover, if it was in the nature of doctors more than of other men not to like being constables, how came Mr. Dowlas to be so eager to act in that capacity?

"*I* don't want to act the constable," said the farrier, driven into a corner by this **merciless** reasoning; "and there's no man can say it of me, if he'd tell the truth. But if there's to be any **jealousy** and **en*vy*ing** about going to Kench's in the rain, let them go as like it--you won't get me to go, I can tell you."

By the landlord's intervention, however, the dispute was accommodated. Mr. Dowlas consented to go as a second person disinclined to act officially; and so poor Silas, **furnished** with some old coverings, turned out with his two **companions** into the rain again, thinking of the long night-hours before him, not as those do who long to rest, but as those who expect to "watch for the morning".

Thesaurus

companions: (*n*) circle, entourage, people.
constable: (*n*) police officer, policeman, alderman, burgomaster, Petty constable, portreeve, alguazil, gendarme, tipstaff, peon, patrolman.
contending: (*adj*) contentious, conflicting, competitive, competing, competitory, combatant, challenging, factious, militant, warlike, fighting.
envying: (*adj*) invidious.
furnished: (*adj*) fitted, arranged, privileged, instruct, carrying weapons, equipt, enlightened; (*v*) provide, furnish, begone, beset.
indisposed: (*adj*) ill, ailing, loath, sick, averse, poorly, sickly, reluctant, unwilling, unwell, diseased. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) inclined, willing, keen, disposed.
jealousy: (*n*) suspicion, jealous, jealousness, envy, envious, alertness, distrust, contention, competition, scruple, qualm.
merciless: (*adj*) brutal, pitiless, unmerciful, remorseless, heartless, implacable, inhuman, hard, grim, barbarous, unfeeling. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) charitable, kind, humane, soft, caring, tolerant.
renounce: (*v*) abandon, abdicate, abjure, relinquish, desert, reject, give up, disown, deny, quit, forgo. ANTONYMS: (*v*) acknowledge, reassert, assert, continue, retain, persist.

CHAPTER VIII

When Godfrey Cass returned from Mrs. Osgood's party at midnight, he was not much surprised to learn that Dunsey had not come home. Perhaps he had not sold Wildfire, and was waiting for another chance-- perhaps, on that **foggy** afternoon, he had preferred housing himself at the Red Lion at Batherley for the night, if the run had kept him in that neighbourhood; for he was not likely to feel much concern about leaving his brother in **suspense**. Godfrey's mind was too full of Nancy Lammeter's looks and behaviour, too full of the **exasperation** against himself and his lot, which the sight of her always produced in him, for him to give much thought to Wildfire, or to the probabilities of Dunstan's conduct.

The next morning the whole village was excited by the story of the robbery, and Godfrey, like every one else, was occupied in gathering and discussing news about it, and in visiting the Stone-pits. The rain had washed away all possibility of **distinguishing** foot-marks, but a close investigation of the spot had disclosed, in the direction opposite to the village, a tinder-box, with a **flint** and steel, half sunk in the mud. It was not Silas's tinder-box, for the only one he had ever had was still standing on his shelf; and the **inference** generally accepted was, that the tinder-box in the **ditch** was somehow connected with the robbery. A small minority shook their heads, and **intimated** their opinion that it was not a robbery to have much light thrown on it by tinder-boxes, that Master Marner's tale had a

Thesaurus

distinguishing: (*adj*) distinctive, identifying, typical, discriminating, specific, distinct, peculiar; (*adv*) distinguishingly; (*adj, v*) discriminative; (*v*) distinguish; (*n*) hearing. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) common, typical.

ditch: (*n*) canal, channel, dike; (*v*) desert, dump, chuck, abandon, discard, cut, leave; (*n, v*) moat. ANTONYMS: (*v*) accept, take, adopt, maintain; (*n*) ridge.

exasperation: (*adj, n*) exacerbation; (*n*) wrath, annoyance, anger, resentment, rage, irritation, ire, indignation, heat, displeasure. ANTONYMS: (*n*) delight, calmness, satisfaction.

flint: (*adj*) stone, pebble, fossil, granite, marble; (*n*) quartz, silica, flint river, gunflint, crystal, crag.

foggy: (*adj*) hazy, misty, brumous, murky, blurred, bleary, fuzzy, opaque, thick, indefinite, nebulous. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) precise, sunny.

inference: (*n*) corollary, implication, illation, conclusion, assumption, judgment, surmise, derivation, analogy, guess, result. ANTONYM: (*n*) fact.

intimated: (*adj*) tacit, furtive, dejected.

suspense: (*n*) doubt, expectancy, anticipation, indecision, insecurity, unrest, expectation, irresolution, suspension, tension; (*adj, n*) hesitation. ANTONYM: (*n*) knowledge.

queer look with it, and that such things had been known as a man's doing himself a mischief, and then setting the justice to look for the **doer**. But when questioned closely as to their grounds for this opinion, and what Master Marner had to gain by such false pretences, they only shook their heads as before, and observed that there was no knowing what some folks counted gain; moreover, that everybody had a right to their own opinions, grounds or no grounds, and that the weaver, as everybody knew, was partly crazy. Mr. Macey, though he joined in the defence of Marner against all suspicions of **deceit**, also pooh-poohed the **tinder**-box; indeed, **repudiated** it as a rather **impious** suggestion, tending to imply that everything must be done by human hands, and that there was no power which could make away with the guineas without moving the bricks. Nevertheless, he turned round rather sharply on Mr. Tookey, when the **zealous** deputy, feeling that this was a view of the case peculiarly suited to a parish-clerk, carried it still farther, and doubted whether it was right to **inquire** into a robbery at all when the circumstances were so mysterious.

"As if," concluded Mr. Tookey--"as if there was nothing but what could be made out by justices and constables."

"Now, don't you be for overshooting the mark, Tookey," said Mr. Macey, nodding his head aside **admonishingly**. "That's what you're allays at; if I throw a stone and hit, you think there's summat better than hitting, and you try to throw a stone beyond. What I said was against the tinder-box: I said nothing against justices and constables, for they're o' King George's making, and it 'ud be ill-becoming a man in a parish office to fly out again' King George."

While these discussions were going on amongst the group outside the Rainbow, a higher consultation was being carried on within, under the presidency of Mr. Crackenthorp, the rector, assisted by Squire Cass and other substantial **parishioners**. It had just occurred to Mr. Snell, the landlord--he being, as he observed, a man accustomed to put two and two together--to connect with the tinder-box, which, as deputy-constable, he himself had had the honourable distinction of finding, certain recollections of a pedlar who had called to drink at the house about a month before, and had actually stated that he

Thesaurus

admonishingly: (*adv*) reproachfully, reprovingly, admonitorily.
deceit: (*n*) guile, artifice, deception, falsehood, ruse, pretense, fraud, trickery; (*adj, n*) cunning, craft, art. ANTONYMS: (*n*) sincerity, truthfulness, fairness, frankness, loyalty, straightforwardness, uprightness, truth.
doer: (*n*) actor, executor, performer, operator, factor, perpetrator, facient, mover and shaker, high flier, fireball, worker.
impious: (*adj*) godless, ungodly, disrespectful, profane, unholy, sinful, unhallowed, wicked, iniquitous, irreligious, irreverent. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) reverent, devout, restrained, good.
inquire: (*v*) demand, ask, explore, enquire, inspect, research, consult, pry, request, wonder; (*n, v*) question. ANTONYM: (*v*) answer.
parishioners: (*n*) people attending worship, worshippers.
repudiated: (*adj*) unacknowledged.
tinder: (*n*) spunk, punk, touchwood, ingle, nerve, ignitor, ignition, igniter, hoodlum, hood, goon.
zealous: (*adj*) keen, enthusiastic, fervent, ardent, avid, devoted, strenuous, vehement, glowing, fiery; (*adj, n*) passionate. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) indifferent, apathetic, unenthusiastic, cool, halfhearted, moderate.

carried a tinder-box about with him to light his pipe. Here, surely, was a clue to be followed out. And as memory, when duly **impregnated** with **ascertained** facts, is sometimes surprisingly fertile, Mr. Snell gradually recovered a vivid impression of the effect produced on him by the pedlar's countenance and conversation. He had a "look with his eye" which fell unpleasantly on Mr. Snell's sensitive organism. To be sure, he didn't say anything particular--no, except that about the tinder-box--but it isn't what a man says, it's the way he says it. Moreover, he had a **swarthy foreignness** of complexion which boded little honesty.

"Did he wear ear-rings?" Mr. Crackenthorp wished to know, having some acquaintance with foreign customs.

"Well--stay--let me see," said Mr. Snell, like a **docile** clairvoyante, who would really not make a mistake if she could help it. After stretching the **corners** of his mouth and contracting his eyes, as if he were trying to see the ear-rings, he appeared to give up the effort, and said, "Well, he'd got ear-rings in his box to sell, so it's nat'ral to suppose he might wear 'em. But he called at every house, a'most, in the village; there's somebody else, **mayhap**, saw 'em in his ears, though I can't take upon me rightly to say."

Mr. Snell was correct in his **surmise**, that somebody else would remember the pedlar's ear-rings. For on the spread of inquiry among the villagers it was stated with gathering emphasis, that the parson had wanted to know whether the pedlar wore ear-rings in his ears, and an impression was created that a great deal depended on the eliciting of this fact. Of course, every one who heard the question, not having any distinct image of the pedlar as *without* ear-rings, immediately had an image of him *with* ear-rings, larger or smaller, as the case might be; and the image was presently taken for a vivid recollection, so that the glazier's wife, a **well**-intentioned woman, not given to lying, and whose house was among the cleanest in the village, was ready to declare, as sure as ever she meant to take the sacrament the very next Christmas that was ever coming, that she had seen big ear-rings, in the shape of the young moon, in the pedlar's two ears; while Jinny Oates, the cobbler's daughter, being a more imaginative person,

Thesaurus

ascertained: (*adj*) discovered, determined; (*v*) absolute, recognized, received, noted, notorious, decisive, unmistakable, unequivocal, positive.
corners: (*adj*) cornered.
docile: (*adj*) dutiful, compliant, meek, submissive, tame, teachable, humble, obedient, acquiescent, conformable; (*adj, v*) tractable. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) stubborn, assertive, unruly, willful, defiant, vicious, determined, uncooperative, obstinate, disobedient, intractable.
foreignness: (*n*) alienage, alienism, curiousness, quality, foreign, exoticness, peregrinity, strangeness, exotism, extraneity.
impregnated: (*adj*) fertilised, fertilized, full, saturated, made pregnant, sated, fertile, adequate, copious, inseminated, ample.
mayhap: (*adv*) haply, may be, possibly, peradventure, perchance, perhaps, by chance.
surmise: (*n, v*) guess; (*v*) suppose, suspect, presume, imagine, divine, doubt; (*n*) hypothesis, supposition, speculation, assumption. ANTONYMS: (*n*) knowledge, measurement.
swarthy: (*adj*) dusky, black, swart, sable, somber, dun, tawny, coloured, colored, atramentous; (*n*) brunette. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) fair, light.
well-intentioned: (*adj*) innocent, sympathetic.

stated not only that she had seen them too, but that they had made her blood **creep**, as it did at that very moment while there she stood.

Also, by way of throwing further light on this clue of the tinder-box, a collection was made of all the articles purchased from the pedlar at various houses, and carried to the Rainbow to be exhibited there. In fact, there was a general feeling in the village, that for the clearing-up of this robbery there must be a great deal done at the Rainbow, and that no man need offer his wife an excuse for going there while it was the scene of severe public duties.

Some disappointment was felt, and perhaps a little **indignation** also, when it became known that Silas Marner, on being questioned by the Squire and the parson, had retained no other **recollection** of the pedlar than that he had called at his door, but had not entered his house, having turned away at once when Silas, holding the door **ajar**, had said that he wanted nothing. This had been Silas's testimony, though he **clutched** strongly at the idea of the pedlar's being the **culprit**, if only because it gave him a definite image of a whereabout for his gold after it had been taken away from its hiding-place: he could see it now in the pedlar's box. But it was observed with some irritation in the village, that anybody but a "blind creatur" like Marner would have seen the man prowling about, for how came he to leave his tinder-box in the ditch close by, if he hadn't been **lingering** there? Doubtless, he had made his observations when he saw Marner at the door. Anybody might know-- and only look at him--that the weaver was a half-crazy miser. It was a wonder the pedlar hadn't murdered him; men of that sort, with rings in their ears, had been known for murderers often and often; there had been one tried at the 'sizes, not so long ago but what there were people living who remembered it.

Godfrey Cass, indeed, entering the Rainbow during one of Mr. Snell's frequently repeated recitals of his testimony, had treated it lightly, stating that he himself had bought a pen-knife of the pedlar, and thought him a **merry** grinning fellow enough; it was all nonsense, he said, about the man's evil looks. But this was spoken of in the village as the random talk of youth, "as if it was only Mr. Snell who had seen something odd about the pedlar!" On the contrary, there

Thesaurus

ajar: (*v*) dissentient, unclosed, unstopped, wide open, out of tune; (*adj*) open, gaping, partly open, not closed.
clutched: (*adj*) tense, worried, anxious, neurotic.
creep: (*v*) grovel, sneak, steal, fawn, lurk, truckle, cringe; (*n*) creeping, crawling, toady, sycophant. ANTONYMS: (*v*) race, dash, hasten, hurry, speed, fly.
culprit: (*adj, n*) convict; (*n*) delinquent, accused, malefactor, perpetrator, transgressor, prisoner, sinner, offender; (*adj*) guilty, felon.
indignation: (*n*) anger, resentment, displeasure, grudge, umbrage, rage, outrage, exasperation, choler, dudgeon; (*adj, n*) wrath. ANTONYMS: (*n*) contentment, pleasure.
lingering: (*adj*) long, chronic, extended, dilatory, protracted, prolonged, residual, lengthy, inactive, dull; (*n*) delay. ANTONYM: (*adj*) quick.
merry: (*adj*) joyful, lively, cheerful, glad, jolly, facetious, frolicsome, lighthearted, festive; (*adj, n*) convivial, jovial. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) gloomy, miserable, serious, uptight.
recollection: (*n, v*) mind; (*n*) reminiscence, recall, anamnesis, remembrance, recognition, memento, memorial, commemoration, memoir, retrospect.

were at least half-a-dozen who were ready to go before Justice Malam, and give in much more striking testimony than any the landlord could **furnish**. It was to be hoped Mr. Godfrey would not go to Tarley and throw cold water on what Mr. Snell said there, and so prevent the justice from drawing up a warrant. He was suspected of intending this, when, after mid-day, he was seen setting off on horseback in the direction of Tarley.

But by this time Godfrey's interest in the robbery had faded before his growing anxiety about Dunstan and Wildfire, and he was going, not to Tarley, but to Batherley, unable to rest in uncertainty about them any longer. The possibility that Dunstan had played him the ugly trick of riding away with Wildfire, to return at the end of a month, when he had gambled away or otherwise **squandered** the price of the horse, was a fear that urged itself upon him more, even, than the thought of an accidental injury; and now that the dance at Mrs. Osgood's was past, he was **irritated** with himself that he had trusted his horse to Dunstan. Instead of trying to still his fears, he encouraged them, with that **superstitious** impression which clings to us all, that if we expect evil very strongly it is the less likely to come; and when he **heard** a horse approaching at a **trot**, and saw a hat rising above a hedge beyond an angle of the lane, he felt as if his **conjuration** had succeeded. But no sooner did the horse come within sight, than his heart sank again. It was not Wildfire; and in a few moments more he discerned that the rider was not Dunstan, but Bryce, who pulled up to speak, with a face that implied something **disagreeable**.

"Well, Mr. Godfrey, that's a lucky brother of **yours**, that Master Dunsey, isn't he?"

"What do you mean?" said Godfrey, hastily.

"Why, hasn't he been home yet?" said Bryce.

"Home? no. What has happened? Be quick. What has he done with my horse?"

"Ah, I thought it was yours, though he pretended you had parted with it to him."

Thesaurus

conjuration: (*n*) incantation, conjuring, adjuration, invocation, necromancy, spell, black art, glamour, witchcraft, conspiracy, trick.
disagreeable: (*adj*) nasty, offensive, uncomfortable, distasteful, cantankerous, cross, ungrateful, abhorrent, horrible, bad, painful. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) pleasant, friendly, amiable, inoffensive, acceptable, desirable, easygoing, happy, pleasing, sweet, nice.
furnish: (*v*) afford, provide, contribute, render, offer, accommodate, supply, outfit, yield, decorate; (*n, v*) give. ANTONYM: (*v*) divest.
heard: (*n*) hearing.
irritated: (*adj*) annoyed, exasperated, incensed, enraged, aggravated, furious, irate, inflamed, sore, displeased, provoked. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) calm, pleased, patient, contented.
squandered: (*adj*) wasted, dissipated, emaciated, devastated, dissolute, diminished, desolated, desolate, cadaverous; (*v*) bewildered, employed ineffectually.
superstitious: (*adj*) superstition, false, groundless, eerie, irrational, fallacious.
trot: (*n, v*) run; (*n*) crib, canter, pony, gait, ride, lope; (*v*) gallop, general, frequent, household.
yours: (*adj*) own.

"Has he thrown him down and broken his knees?" said Godfrey, **flushed** with exasperation.

"Worse than that," said Bryce. "You see, I'd made a **bargain** with him to buy the horse for a hundred and twenty--a **swinging** price, but I always **liked** the horse. And what does he do but go and stake him--fly at a **hedge** with **stakes** in it, **atop** of a bank with a ditch before it. The horse had been dead a pretty good while when he was found. So he hasn't been home since, has he?"

"Home? no," said Godfrey, "and he'd better keep away. Confound me for a fool! I might have known this would be the end of it."

"Well, to tell you the truth," said Bryce, "after I'd bargained for the horse, it did come into my head that he might be riding and selling the horse without your knowledge, for I didn't believe it was his own. I knew Master Dunsey was up to his **tricks** sometimes. But where can he be gone? He's never been seen at Batherley. He couldn't have been hurt, for he must have walked off."

"Hurt?" said Godfrey, bitterly. "He'll never be hurt--he's made to hurt other people."

"And so you *did* give him leave to sell the horse, eh?" said Bryce.

"Yes; I wanted to part with the horse--he was always a little too hard in the mouth for me," said Godfrey; his pride making him **wince** under the idea that Bryce **guessed** the sale to be a matter of necessity. "I was going to see after him--I thought some **mischief** had happened. I'll go back now," he added, turning the horse's head, and wishing he could get rid of Bryce; for he felt that the long-dreaded crisis in his life was close upon him. "You're coming on to Raveloe, aren't you?"

"Well, no, not now," said Bryce. "I *was* coming round there, for I had to go to Flitton, and I thought I might as well take you in my way, and just let you know all I knew myself about the horse. I suppose Master Dunsey didn't like to show himself till the ill news had blown over a bit. He's perhaps gone to pay a visit at the Three Crowns, by Whitbridge--I know he's fond of the house."

Thesaurus

atop: (*adj*) overhead.
bargain: (*adj, n, v*) cheap; (*n, v*) covenant, deal; (*n*) agreement, treaty, arrangement, buy, chaffer; (*v*) exchange, stipulate, agree. ANTONYM: (*adj*) inflated.
flushed: (*adj, n*) red, sanguine; (*adj*) feverish, glowing, aroused, aflame, burning, exultant, exulting; (*n*) flush, elated. ANTONYM: (*adj*) cool.
guessed: (*adj*) rude, inscrutable.
hedge: (*v*) fudge, dodge, elude, evade, skirt, duck, avoid, circumvent, equivocate; (*n*) barrier, hedging. ANTONYM: (*v*) confront.
liked: (*adj*) popular, loved, favorite, preferred. ANTONYM: (*adj*) disliked.
mischief: (*adj, n*) evil, hurt, harm; (*n*) damage, ill, detriment, disadvantage, devilry, caper, devilment, maleficence. ANTONYMS: (*n*) obedience, beneficence, help.
stakes: (*n*) stake, ante, wager, kitty, jackpot, pool, pot, gamble, prize, interest, fence.
swinging: (*adj*) swaying, excessive, lilting, inordinate, hanging, exorbitant, pendulous, outrageous, preposterous, extravagant; (*n*) slewing.
tricks: (*n*) actions, behavior, thing, clowning around, fooling, magic, plunder, possession, activities.
wince: (*v*) shrink, cringe, quail, cower, jump, contract; (*n, v*) flinch, start, winch; (*adj*) bear ill; (*n*) sit on thorns.

"Perhaps he is," said Godfrey, rather **absently**. Then **rousing** himself, he said, with an effort at **carelessness**, "We shall hear of him soon enough, I'll be bound."

"Well, here's my turning," said Bryce, not surprised to perceive that Godfrey was rather "down"; "so I'll bid you good-day, and wish I may bring you better news another time."

Godfrey rode along slowly, representing to himself the scene of confession to his father from which he felt that there was now no longer any escape. The revelation about the money must be made the very next morning; and if he **withheld** the rest, Dunstan would be sure to come back shortly, and, finding that he must bear the **brunt** of his father's anger, would tell the whole story out of spite, even though he had nothing to gain by it. There was one step, perhaps, by which he might still win Dunstan's silence and put off the evil day: he might tell his father that he had himself spent the money paid to him by Fowler; and as he had never been guilty of such an offence before, the affair would blow over after a little storming. But Godfrey could not bend himself to this. He felt that in letting Dunstan have the money, he had already been guilty of a breach of trust hardly less **culpable** than that of spending the money directly for his own **behoof**; and yet there was a distinction between the two acts which made him feel that the one was so much more **blackening** than the other as to be intolerable to him.

"I don't pretend to be a good fellow," he said to himself; "but I'm not a scoundrel--at least, I'll stop short somewhere. I'll bear the consequences of what I *have* done sooner than make believe I've done what I never would have done. I'd never have spent the money for my own pleasure--I was tortured into it."

Through the remainder of this day Godfrey, with only occasional fluctuations, kept his will bent in the direction of a complete avowal to his father, and he withheld the story of Wildfire's loss till the next morning, that it might serve him as an introduction to heavier matter. The old Squire was accustomed to his son's frequent absence from home, and thought neither Dunstan's nor Wildfire's non-appearance a matter calling for remark. Godfrey said to himself

Thesaurus

absently: (*adv*) absentmindedly, missingly, lackingly, inattentively, wantingly, offly, deficiently, lostly, removedly, preoccupiedly, outly.
behoof: (*n*) advantage, behalf, service, behoove.
blackening: (*n*) blackened, density, alkaline blackening, character assassination.
brunt: (*n*) jolt, onset, push, shock, thrust, throw, impact, strain, blow, bang; (*adj*) stress.
carelessness: (*n*) negligence, inattention, indifference, nonchalance, thoughtlessness, abandon, incaution, disregard, omission, forgetfulness, dereliction. ANTONYMS: (*n*) attention, caution, alertness, vigilance, carefulness, thoughtfulness, assiduousness, economy, regard, prudence, forethought.
culpable: (*adj*) guilty, blameworthy, censurable, reprehensible, blameable, blameful, condemnable, liable, criminal, to blame, responsible. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) innocent, inculpable, blameless.
rousing: (*adj*) stirring, provocative, bracing, thrilling, inspiring, exhilarating, moving; (*n*) awakening, wakening, stimulation; (*v*) rouse. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) conciliatory, dull, relaxing.
withheld: (*adj*) hidden, uncommitted. ANTONYM: (*adj*) ongoing.

again and again, that if he let slip this one opportunity of confession, he might never have another; the revelation might be made even in a more **odious** way than by Dunstan's **malignity**: *she* might come as she had threatened to do. And then he tried to make the scene easier to himself by rehearsal: he made up his mind how he would pass from the admission of his weakness in letting Dunstan have the money to the fact that Dunstan had a hold on him which he had been unable to shake off, and how he would work up his father to expect something very bad before he told him the fact. The old Squire was an implacable man: he made resolutions in violent anger, and he was not to be moved from them after his anger had subsided-- as fiery volcanic matters cool and harden into rock. Like many violent and implacable men, he allowed **evils** to grow under favour of his own **heedlessness**, till they pressed upon him with **exasperating** force, and then he turned round with fierce severity and became **unrelentingly** hard. This was his system with his tenants: he allowed them to get into arrears, neglect their fences, reduce their stock, sell their straw, and otherwise go the wrong way,--and then, when he became short of money in consequence of this indulgence, he took the hardest measures and would listen to no appeal. Godfrey knew all this, and felt it with the greater force because he had constantly suffered annoyance from witnessing his father's sudden fits of unrelentingness, for which his own habitual irresolution deprived him of all sympathy. (He was not critical on the faulty indulgence which preceded these fits; *that* seemed to him natural enough.) Still there was just the chance, Godfrey thought, that his father's pride might see this marriage in a light that would induce him to hush it up, rather than turn his son out and make the family the talk of the country for ten miles round.

This was the view of the case that Godfrey managed to keep before him pretty closely till midnight, and he went to sleep thinking that he had done with inward debating. But when he **awoke** in the still morning darkness he found it impossible to **reawaken** his evening thoughts; it was as if they had been tired out and were not to be roused to further work. Instead of arguments for confession, he could now feel the presence of nothing but its evil consequences: the old dread of disgrace came back--the old shrinking from the thought of raising a hopeless barrier between himself and Nancy-- the old disposition to rely on

Thesaurus

awoke: (*adj*) awakened.
evils: (*n*) mala.
exasperating: (*adj*) annoying, bothersome, maddening, infuriating, trying, irritating, tedious, vexatious, vexing, galling, exacerbating. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) pleasing, pleasant, satisfying.
heedlessness: (*n*) neglect, rashness, carelessness, inattention, inadvertence, recklessness, indifference, inattentiveness, foolhardiness, disregard, temerity. ANTONYMS: (*n*) mindfulness, caution.
malignity: (*n*) malevolence, malignance, venom, animosity, enmity, hatred, evil, rancor, spite, malignancy, hate. ANTONYM: (*n*) benignity.
odious: (*adj, v*) hateful, obnoxious; (*adj*) detestable, hideous, nasty, execrable, disgusting, abhorrent, abominable, heinous, forbidding. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) pleasant, delightful, agreeable, lovable, nice.
reawaken: (*v*) revive, rejuvenate, reproduce, arouse, restart, stimulate, breathe life into, awaken, bring back, reanimate, revitalize. ANTONYM: (*v*) calm.
unrelentingly: (*adv*) unremittingly, persistently, adamantly, harshly, incessantly, continuously, constantly, inexorably, endlessly, insistently, severely.

chances which might be **favourable** to him, and save him from **betrayal**. Why, after all, should he cut off the hope of them by his own act? He had seen the matter in a wrong light yesterday. He had been in a **rage** with Dunstan, and had thought of nothing but a **thorough break**-up of their mutual understanding; but what it would be really wisest for him to do, was to try and **soften** his father's anger against Dunsey, and keep things as nearly as possible in their old condition. If Dunsey did not come back for a few days (and Godfrey did not know but that the **rascal** had enough money in his pocket to enable him to keep away still longer), everything might blow over.

Thesaurus

betrayal: (*n*) faithlessness, deception, treason, infidelity, subversiveness, traitorousness, disclosure, revelation, perfidy, disloyalty, dishonesty. ANTONYMS: (*n*) loyalty, safeguarding, keeping, honesty, guarding, preserving, allegiance.
break-up: (*n*) split, estrangement.
favourable: (*adj*) convenient, encouraging, good, auspicious, useful, benevolent, favorable, profitable, conducive, opportune, prosperous.
rage: (*adj, n, v*) fume, bluster; (*adj, n*) wrath, indignation, frenzy, mania; (*n*) passion, anger, craze, exasperation; (*n, v*) storm. ANTONYMS: (*n*) gentleness, composure, calm, equanimity, pleasure, serenity.
rascal: (*n*) villain, rapscallion, monkey, miscreant, knave, scoundrel, scamp, rogue, varlet, vagabond, brat.
soften: (*adj, v*) moderate, mitigate, mollify, assuage, relieve; (*v*) melt, dull, relent, mute, alleviate; (*adj, n, v*) palliate. ANTONYMS: (*v*) harden, solidify, set, congeal, exacerbate, freeze, sharpen, stand, increase.
thorough: (*adj*) complete, full, profound, exhaustive, absolute, good, comprehensive, detailed, extensive, sweeping, careful. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) partial, sketchy, careless, slack, imperfect, sloppy, rushed, restricted, inadequate, halfhearted, dense.

CHAPTER IX

Godfrey rose and took his own breakfast earlier than usual, but lingered in the wainscoted parlour till his younger brothers had finished their meal and gone out; **awaiting** his father, who always took a walk with his managing-man before breakfast. Every one breakfasted at a different hour in the Red House, and the Squire was always the latest, giving a long chance to a rather feeble morning appetite before he tried it. The table had been spread with substantial **eatables** nearly two hours before he presented himself-- a tall, stout man of sixty, with a face in which the knit brow and rather hard glance seemed contradicted by the **slack** and feeble mouth. His person showed marks of habitual neglect, his dress was **slovenly**; and yet there was something in the presence of the old Squire **distinguishable** from that of the ordinary farmers in the parish, who were perhaps every **whit** as refined as he, but, having **slouched** their way through life with a consciousness of being in the vicinity of their "betters", wanted that **self**-possession and **authoritativeness** of voice and carriage which belonged to a man who thought of superiors as remote existences with whom he had personally little more to do than with America or the stars. The Squire had been used to parish homage all his life, used to the **presupposition** that his family, his tankards, and everything that was his, were the oldest and best; and as he never associated with any gentry higher than himself, his opinion was not disturbed by comparison.

Thesaurus

authoritativeness: (*n*) divine right, dynastic rights, magisteriality.
awaiting: (*adj*) looming, imminent, in the near future, pending, expectant.
distinguishable: (*adj, adv*) appreciable, perceptible, definite, visible; (*adj*) distinct, apparent, marked, differentiable, recognizable; (*adv*) observable, noticeable. ANTONYM: (*adj*) inseparable.
eatables: (*n*) food, sustenance, victuals, fare; (*v*) ingesta.
presupposition: (*n*) hypothesis, supposition, presumption, premise, postulation, condition, guess, postulate, assumed position, preconception, premiss.
self-possession: (*n*) composure, poise, imperturbability, serenity, aplomb, coolness, balance, restraint, self-control, morale, presence.
slack: (*adj, v*) loose, lax, remiss, slow, dull; (*adj*) indolent, negligent, idle, flaccid, limp, baggy. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) strict, taut, thorough, brisk, diligent, attentive, upright, prompt, meticulous; (*v*) tighten; (*n*) tautness.
slouched: (*adj*) slumped.
slovenly: (*adj*) careless, untidy, sloppy, frowzy, dowdy, unkempt, negligent, frowsy, messy, disheveled; (*adv*) slatternly. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) clean, neat, diligent.
whit: (*n*) iota, atom, shred, scintilla, smidgen, tittle, jot, bit, particle, smidgin; (*adj*) dab.

He glanced at his son as he entered the room, and said, "What, sir! haven't *you* had your breakfast yet?" but there was no pleasant morning greeting between them; not because of any **unfriendliness**, but because the sweet flower of courtesy is not a growth of such homes as the Red House.

"Yes, sir," said Godfrey, "I've had my breakfast, but I was waiting to speak to you."

"Ah! well," said the Squire, throwing himself **indifferently** into his chair, and speaking in a **ponderous coughing** fashion, which was felt in Raveloe to be a sort of privilege of his rank, while he cut a piece of beef, and held it up before the deer-hound that had come in with him. "Ring the bell for my ale, will you? You youngsters' business is your own pleasure, mostly. There's no hurry about it for anybody but yourselves."

The Squire's life was quite as idle as his sons', but it was a fiction kept up by himself and his contemporaries in Raveloe that youth was exclusively the period of folly, and that their aged wisdom was constantly in a state of endurance **mitigated** by sarcasm. Godfrey waited, before he spoke again, until the ale had been brought and the door closed--an interval during which Fleet, the deer-hound, had consumed enough bits of beef to make a poor man's holiday dinner.

"There's been a cursed piece of ill-luck with Wildfire," he began; "happened the day before yesterday."

"What! broke his knees?" said the Squire, after taking a draught of ale. "I thought you knew how to ride better than that, sir. I never threw a horse down in my life. If I had, I might ha' whistled for another, for *my* father wasn't quite so ready to **unstring** as some other fathers I know of. But they must turn over a new leaf--*they* must. What with mortgages and arrears, I'm as short o' cash as a **roadside pauper**. And that fool Kimble says the newspaper's talking about peace. Why, the country wouldn't have a leg to stand on. Prices 'ud run down like a jack, and I should never get my arrears, not if I sold all the fellows up. And there's that damned Fowler, I won't put up with him any longer; I've told Winthrop to go to Cox this very day. The lying **scoundrel** told me he'd be sure

Thesaurus

coughing: (*n*) coughs, breathing out.
indifferently: (*adv*) carelessly, coldly, nonchalantly, listlessly, unconcernedly, uninterestedly, neutrally, middlingly, casually, unbiasedly, disinterestedly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) passionately, obsessively, carefully, eagerly, energetically, warmly, anxiously, enthusiastically, sympathetically.
mitigated: (*adj*) eased, palliate, ease, relieved, disguised, cloaked.
pauper: (*n*) poor man, mumper, bum, poor person, starveling; (*adj*) poor, indigent, penniless; (*v*) bust, fold.
ponderous: (*adj*) heavy, grave, onerous, burdensome, massive, unwieldy, bulky, stodgy, hard, tedious, dull. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) elegant, graceful, lively, brisk, manageable.
roadside: (*n*) verge, shoulder, border, edge, margin.
scoundrel: (*n, v*) rascal; (*n*) knave, blackguard, cad, villain, ruffian, miscreant, crook, rapscallion, varlet, scalawag.
unfriendliness: (*n*) disaffection, aggression, enmity, alienation, dislike, rancor, ill will, misanthropy, animosity, unkindness, bad constitution. ANTONYMS: (*n*) friendliness, closeness, warmth, welcome, harmony.
unstring: (*v*) take, take away, shake, enervate, emasculate, remove.

to pay me a hundred last month. He takes advantage because he's on that **outlying** farm, and thinks I shall forget him."

The Squire had delivered this speech in a coughing and interrupted manner, but with no pause long enough for Godfrey to make it a **pretext** for taking up the word again. He felt that his father meant to ward off any request for money on the ground of the misfortune with Wildfire, and that the emphasis he had thus been led to lay on his **shortness** of cash and his arrears was likely to produce an attitude of mind the utmost unfavourable for his own disclosure. But he must go on, now he had begun.

"It's worse than breaking the horse's knees--he's been staked and killed," he said, as soon as his father was silent, and had begun to cut his meat. "But I wasn't thinking of asking you to buy me another horse; I was only thinking I'd lost the means of paying you with the price of Wildfire, as I'd meant to do. Dunsey took him to the hunt to sell him for me the other day, and after he'd made a bargain for a hundred and twenty with Bryce, he went after the hounds, and took some fool's leap or other that did for the horse at once. If it hadn't been for that, I should have paid you a hundred pounds this morning."

The Squire had laid down his knife and fork, and was staring at his son in amazement, not being sufficiently quick of brain to form a probable guess as to what could have caused so strange an **inversion** of the **paternal** and **filial** relations as this proposition of his son to pay him a hundred pounds.

"The truth is, sir--I'm very sorry--I was quite to blame," said Godfrey. "Fowler did pay that hundred pounds. He paid it to me, when I was over there one day last month. And Dunsey bothered me for the money, and I let him have it, because I hoped I should be able to pay it you before this."

The Squire was purple with anger before his son had done speaking, and found utterance difficult. "You let Dunsey have it, sir? And how long have you been so thick with Dunsey that you must ***collogue*** with him to **embezzle** my money? Are you turning out a **scamp**? I tell you I won't have it. I'll turn the whole pack of you out of the house together, and marry again. I'd have you to remember, sir, my property's got no entail on it;--since my grandfather's time the

Thesaurus

collogue: (*v*) confabulate, confab, conspire, consult, earwig, talk, confer.
embezzle: (*v*) appropriate, rob, steal, pilfer, misappropriate, filch, defalcate, thieve, plunder, misuse, lift. ANTONYMS: (*v*) compensate, reimburse.
filial: (*adj*) dutiful.
inversion: (*n*) reversal, turnover, transposition, everting, eversion, anastrophe, retroversion, subversion, movement, negation, reversion.
outlying: (*adj*) faraway, remote, far, outer, isolated, outdoor, outward, exterior, peripheral, outstanding, secluded. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) central, metropolitan, nearby, neighboring.
paternal: (*adj*) parental, agnate, maternal, agnatic, concerned, solicitous, patrimonial, ancestral, fatherlike, racial, fraternal. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) filial, motherly.
pretext: (*n*) pretense, pretension, color, pretence, mask, plea, guise, sham, appearance; (*n, v*) excuse, cloak.
scamp: (*n*) rascal, imp, miscreant, scalawag, rogue, monkey, villain, brat, scallywag, rapscallion; (*v*) skimp.
shortness: (*n*) lack, abruptness, brusqueness, curtness, briefness, shortage, conciseness, gruffness, curtailment, short, shortcoming. ANTONYMS: (*n*) tallness, height, longness, wordiness, courtesy.

Casses can do as they like with their land. Remember that, sir. Let Dunsey have the money! Why should you let Dunsey have the money? There's some lie at the bottom of it."

"There's no lie, sir," said Godfrey. "I wouldn't have spent the money myself, but Dunsey bothered me, and I was a fool, and let him have it. But I meant to pay it, whether he did or not. That's the whole story. I never meant to embezzle money, and I'm not the man to do it. You never knew me do a dishonest trick, sir."

"Where's Dunsey, then? What do you stand talking there for? Go and fetch Dunsey, as I tell you, and let him give account of what he wanted the money for, and what he's done with it. He shall repent it. I'll turn him out. I said I would, and I'll do it. He shan't brave me. Go and fetch him."

"Dunsey isn't come back, sir."

"What! did he break his own neck, then?" said the Squire, with some disgust at the idea that, in that case, he could not fulfil his threat.

"No, he wasn't hurt, I believe, for the horse was found dead, and Dunsey must have **walked** off. I daresay we shall see him again by-and-by. I don't know where he is."

"And what must you be letting him have my money for? Answer me that," said the Squire, attacking Godfrey again, since Dunsey was not within reach.

"Well, sir, I don't know," said Godfrey, **hesitatingly**. That was a feeble **evasion**, but Godfrey was not fond of lying, and, not being sufficiently aware that no sort of **duplicity** can long flourish without the help of vocal falsehoods, he was quite **unprepared** with invented motives.

"You don't know? I tell you what it is, sir. You've been up to some trick, and you've been bribing him not to tell," said the Squire, with a sudden **acuteness** which startled Godfrey, who felt his heart beat violently at the **nearness** of his father's guess. The sudden alarm pushed him on to take the next step--a very slight impulse suffices for that on a downward road.

Thesaurus

acuteness: (*n*) acuity, sharpness, acumen, discrimination, gravity, insight, sensitivity, perspicacity, penetration, keenness, intensity. ANTONYMS: (*n*) faintness, insignificance, dullness.

duplicity: (*n*) deception, dishonesty, artifice, craft, deceitfulness, guile, treachery, betrayal, chicanery, fraud, trickery. ANTONYMS: (*n*) loyalty, sincerity, straightforwardness, allegiance, truthfulness.

evasion: (*n, v*) equivocation, avoidance, subterfuge, prevarication; (*n*) escape, quibble, dodge, excuse, elusion, casuistry, circumvention. ANTONYMS: (*n*) facing, confrontation, confronting, meeting.

hesitatingly: (*adv*) indecisively, irresolutely, hesitating, waveringly, doubtfully, undecidedly, vacillatingly, falteringly. ANTONYM: (*adv*) unhesitatingly.

nearness: (*n*) closeness, contiguity, vicinity, familiarity, adjacency, proximity, propinquity, presence, immediacy, neighborhood, nearby. ANTONYMS: (*n*) distance, farness, remoteness.

unprepared: (*adj*) impromptu, extemporaneous, raw, unrehearsed, unready, extemporary, crude, improvised, unwary, surprised, weak. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) prepared, ready, attentive.

walked: (*adj*) exempt; (*v*) yode.

"Why, sir," he said, trying to speak with careless ease, "it was a little affair between me and Dunsey; it's no matter to anybody else. It's hardly worth while to pry into young men's fooleries: it wouldn't have made any difference to you, sir, if I'd not had the bad luck to lose Wildfire. I should have paid you the money."

"Fooleries! Pshaw! it's time you'd done with fooleries. And I'd have you know, sir, you *must* ha' done with 'em," said the Squire, **frowning** and casting an angry glance at his son. "Your **goings**-on are not what I shall find money for any longer. There's my grandfather had his stables full o' horses, and kept a good house, too, and in worse times, by what I can make out; and so might I, if I hadn't four **good**-for-nothing fellows to hang on me like horse-leeches. I've been too good a father to you all--that's what it is. But I shall pull up, sir."

Godfrey was silent. He was not likely to be very **penetrating** in his judgments, but he had always had a sense that his father's indulgence had not been kindness, and had had a vague longing for some discipline that would have checked his own **errant** weakness and helped his better will. The Squire ate his bread and meat hastily, took a deep draught of ale, then turned his chair from the table, and **began** to speak again.

"It'll be all the worse for you, you know--you'd need try and help me keep things together."

"Well, sir, I've often offered to take the management of things, but you know you've taken it ill always, and seemed to think I wanted to push you out of your place."

"I know nothing o' your offering or o' my taking it ill," said the Squire, whose memory consisted in certain strong impressions **unmodified** by detail; "but I know, one while you seemed to be thinking o' **marrying**, and I didn't offer to put any obstacles in your way, as some fathers would. I'd as lieve you married Lammeter's daughter as anybody. I suppose, if I'd said you nay, you'd ha' kept on with it; but, for want o' contradiction, you've changed your mind. You're a **shilly**-shally fellow: you take after your poor mother. She never had a will of her own; a woman has no call for one, if she's got a proper man for her

Thesaurus

began: (*v*) Gan.
errant: (*adj*) devious, vagabond, erring, erroneous, perverse, fallible, mistaken, migrant, fugitive; (*adj, n*) notorious; (*adv*) adrift. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) reliable, right, pure, inerrant, correct, trustworthy, righteous.
frowning: (*adj*) dismal, dark, gloomy, lowering, scowling, frowny, clouded; (*adv*) frowningly; (*n*) austere, boisterous, coarse.
goings-on: (*n*) occasion, affair, episode, eventuality, extramarital affair, matter, romance, occurrence, proceeding, transaction, incident.
good-for-nothing: (*adj*) worthless, feckless, pointless, asinine, unworthy; (*n*) loafer, do-nothing, rascal, rotter, cur, trash.
marrying: (*adj*) married.
penetrating: (*adj*) astute, sharp, cutting, discerning, incisive, piercing, perceptive, discriminating, trenchant; (*adj, v*) biting, acute. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) mild, soft, mellow, low, gentle, dull, dense.
shilly-shally: (*n*) indecision, irresoluteness, irresolution, hesitance; (*v*) halt, vacillate, procrastinate, doubt, waste time; (*adj*) irresolute, hesitant.
unmodified: (*adj*) untouched, complete, fixed, neat, pure, savage, straight, supreme, unconditional, unlimited, untainted. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) provisional, tainted.

husband. But *your* wife had need have one, for you hardly know your own mind enough to make both your legs walk one way. The lass hasn't said **downright** she won't have you, has she?"

"No," said Godfrey, feeling very hot and uncomfortable; "but I don't think she will."

"Think! why haven't you the **courage** to ask her? Do you stick to it, you want to have *her*--that's the thing?"

"There's no other woman I want to marry," said Godfrey, evasively.

"Well, then, let me make the offer for you, that's all, if you haven't the **pluck** to do it yourself. Lammeter isn't likely to be **loath** for his daughter to marry into *my* family, I should think. And as for the pretty lass, she wouldn't have her cousin--and there's nobody else, as I see, could ha' stood in your way."

"I'd rather let it be, please sir, at present," said Godfrey, in alarm. "I think she's a little **offended** with me just now, and I should like to speak for myself. A man must manage these things for himself."

"Well, speak, then, and manage it, and see if you can't turn over a new **leaf**. That's what a man must do when he thinks o' marrying."

"I don't see how I can think of it at present, sir. You wouldn't like to settle me on one of the farms, I suppose, and I don't think she'd come to live in this house with all my brothers. It's a different sort of life to what she's been used to."

"Not come to live in this house? Don't tell me. You ask her, that's all," said the Squire, with a short, **scornful** laugh.

"I'd rather let the thing be, at present, sir," said Godfrey. "I hope you won't try to hurry it on by saying anything."

"I shall do what I choose," said the Squire, "and I shall let you know I'm master; else you may turn out and find an estate to drop into somewhere else. Go out and tell Winthrop not to go to Cox's, but wait for me. And tell 'em to get my horse saddled. And stop: look out and get that hack o' Dunsey's sold, and

Thesaurus

courage: (*n*) audacity, fortitude, boldness, nerve, spirit, backbone, valor, heroism, gallantry, mettle, chivalry. ANTONYMS: (*n*) cowardice, faintheartedness, weakness, wimpiness, yellowness.

downright: (*adj, n*) absolute; (*adj, v*) sheer, clear; (*adj*) dead, blunt, candid, plain; (*adv*) absolutely, thoroughly, wholly, decidedly. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) semi, limited, incomplete, questionable, slight; (*adv*) hardly.

leaf: (*n*) page, folio, foliage, petal, frond, leafage, slip, verdure, leaflet; (*n, v*) sheet; (*v*) leave.

loath: (*adj*) unwilling, disinclined, reluctant, loth, indisposed, backward, hesitant, antipathetic, antipathetical, loathe, shy of. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) eager, willing, disposed, keen.

offended: (*adj*) angry, affronted, aggrieved, pained, wronged, annoyed, insulted, shocked, vexed, resentful, injured. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) indifferent, proud, unconcerned.

pluck: (*adj, n*) nerve; (*v*) cull, jerk, gather, pick, fleece, grab; (*n*) grit, courage, boldness; (*n, v*) pull. ANTONYMS: (*n*) cowardice, gutlessness; (*v*) undercharge.

scornful: (*adj*) disdainful, haughty, arrogant, sarcastic, disparaging, derisive, mocking, abusive, scathing, opprobrious, insulting. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) approving, complimentary, humble, sympathetic, admiring.

hand me the money, will you? He'll keep no more hacks at my expense. And if you know where he's sneaking--I daresay you do--you may tell him to spare himself the journey o' coming back home. Let him turn **ostler**, and keep himself. He shan't hang on me any more."

"I don't know where he is, sir; and if I did, it isn't my place to tell him to keep away," said Godfrey, moving towards the door.

"Confound it, sir, don't stay arguing, but go and order my horse," said the Squire, taking up a pipe.

Godfrey left the room, hardly knowing whether he were more relieved by the sense that the interview was ended without having made any change in his position, or more uneasy that he had **entangled** himself still further in **prevarication** and deceit. What had passed about his proposing to Nancy had raised a new alarm, lest by some after-dinner words of his father's to Mr. Lammeter he should be thrown into the embarrassment of being obliged absolutely to decline her when she seemed to be within his reach. He fled to his usual refuge, that of hoping for some unforeseen turn of fortune, some favourable chance which would save him from unpleasant consequences--perhaps even justify his **insincerity** by manifesting its prudence. And in this point of trusting to some throw of fortune's dice, Godfrey can hardly be called specially old-fashioned. Favourable Chance, I fancy, is the god of all men who follow their own devices instead of **obeying** a law they believe in. Let even a polished man of these days get into a position he is ashamed to **avow**, and his mind will be bent on all the possible issues that may deliver him from the **calculable** results of that position. Let him live outside his income, or **shirk** the resolute honest work that brings wages, and he will presently find himself dreaming of a possible benefactor, a possible simpleton who may be cajoled into using his interest, a possible state of mind in some possible person not yet forthcoming. Let him neglect the responsibilities of his office, and he will inevitably anchor himself on the chance that the thing left undone may turn out not to be of the supposed importance. Let him betray his friend's confidence, and he will adore that same cunning complexity called Chance, which gives him

Thesaurus

avow: (*v*) affirm, assert, declare, protest, confess, attest, asseverate; (*adj, v*) admit, acknowledge, own; (*n, v*) aver. ANTONYMS: (*v*) disavow, renounce, refute, disclaim, condemn, censure.

calculable: (*adj*) computable, numerable, arithmetical, analytic, algebraic, measurable, reckonable, countable, estimable, able to be gauged, assessable. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) incalculable, inestimable.

entangled: (*adj*) complicated, intricate, embroiled, complex, foul, confused, matted, tangled, inextricable, knotty; (*v*) entangle.

insincerity: (*n, v*) duplicity; (*n*) falsity, falseness, cant, dishonesty, hollowness, dissimulation, affectation, disingenuousness, faithlessness; (*v*) double dealing. ANTONYMS: (*n*) sincerity, genuineness.

obeying: (*adv*) under.

ostler: (*n*) groom, stableboy, stableman, hostleress, jockey, tiger, swineherd, herdsman, hired hand, hired man, gillie.

prevarication: (*n*) equivocation, deception, lying, lie, fabrication, fib, fraud, fencing, quibble, falsity; (*n, v*) shuffling. ANTONYM: (*n*) correction.

shirk: (*v*) evade, avoid, dodge, duck, goldbrick, elude, malinger, eschew, parry, blink, flinch. ANTONYMS: (*v*) accept, court.

the hope that his friend will never know. Let him **forsake** a decent craft that he may pursue the gentilities of a profession to which nature never **called** him, and his religion will **infallibly** be the worship of **blessed** Chance, which he will believe in as the **mighty creator** of success. The evil principle deprecated in that religion is the **orderly** sequence by which the seed brings forth a **crop** after its kind.

Thesaurus

blessed: (*adj*) happy, holy, cursed, sacred, damned, hallowed, blasted, fortunate, saintly, lucky, divine. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) unlucky, condemned, damned, disapproved, unhappy, unholy, secular.
called: (*adj*) named, titled, chosen, known as; (*v*) nempt, ycleped.
creator: (*n*) author, originator, producer, maker, inventor, artist, founder, builder, manufacturer, initiator, God. ANTONYM: (*n*) destructor.
crop: (*adj, v*) clip, reap, shave; (*v*) browse, top, graze, cultivate, cut; (*n, v*) fruit, harvest; (*n*) craw.
forsake: (*v*) abandon, ditch, relinquish, abdicate, fail, leave, forgo, chuck, disclaim; (*n, v*) drop; (*adj, v*) quit. ANTONYM: (*v*) support.
infallibly: (*adv*) unerringly, unfailingly, inerrably, assuredly, certainly, firmly.
mighty: (*adj*) immense, huge, grand, intense, high, big, forcible, strong, large, great; (*adj, adv*) powerful. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) puny, tiny, weak, insignificant.
orderly: (*adj*) neat, tidy, exact, regular, ordered, systematic, logical, coherent, businesslike; (*adv*) systematically; (*n*) attendant. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) unmanageable, rowdy, wild, disorganized, untidy, disorderly, confused, lawless, messy, defiant, haphazard.

CHAPTER X

Justice Malam was naturally regarded in Tarley and Raveloe as a man of **capacious** mind, seeing that he could draw much wider **conclusions** without evidence than could be expected of his neighbours who were not on the Commission of the Peace. Such a man was not likely to neglect the clue of the tinder-box, and an inquiry was set on foot concerning a pedlar, name unknown, with curly black hair and a foreign **complexion**, carrying a box of **cutlery** and jewellery, and wearing large rings in his ears. But either because inquiry was too slow-footed to **overtake** him, or because the description applied to so many pedlars that inquiry did not know how to choose among them, weeks passed away, and there was no other result concerning the robbery than a gradual **cessation** of the excitement it had caused in Raveloe. Dunstan Cass's absence was hardly a subject of remark: he had once before had a quarrel with his father, and had gone off, nobody knew **whither**, to return at the end of six weeks, take up his old quarters **unforbidden**, and **swagger** as usual. His own family, who equally expected this issue, with the sole difference that the Squire was determined this time to forbid him the old quarters, never mentioned his absence; and when his uncle Kimble or Mr. Osgood noticed it, the story of his having killed Wildfire, and committed some offence against his father, was enough to prevent surprise. To connect the fact of Dunsey's disappearance with that of the robbery **occurring** on the same day, lay quite away from the track of

Thesaurus

capacious: (*adj*) large, big, ample, roomy, broad, extensive, vast, commodious, voluminous, wide, expansive. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) small, confined, squeezed, tiny.
cessation: (*n*) pause, abatement, close, stop, respite, suspension, surcease, standstill, rest, termination; (*n, v*) death. ANTONYMS: (*n*) beginning, continuation, commencement, persistence.
complexion: (*n, v*) tint; (*n*) cast, character, appearance, look, hue, aspect, flush, glow, dye, fashion.
conclusions: (*n*) data.
cutlery: (*n*) cutter, silverware, bolt cutter, tea set, plates, place setting; (*adj*) blade, penknife, whittle, razor, edge tool.
forbid: (*v*) prohibit, ban, disallow, bar, obstruct, exclude, deny, avert, frustrate, to prohibit, enjoin. ANTONYMS: (*v*) allow, let, approve, authorize, stand.
occurring: (*adj*) going on.
overtake: (*v*) catch, attain, catch up with, exceed, overpower, overcome, go by, gain, devastate, outstrip, beat.
swagger: (*n, v*) strut, prance; (*adj, n, v*) bluster; (*v*) boast, show off, parade, ruffle, flourish; (*adj, v*) bully; (*adj*) groovy; (*n*) bragging.
unforbidden: (*v*) unforbid; (*adj*) permissible.
whither: (*adv*) hither, thither, whereunto, whereto, for.

every one's thought--even Godfrey's, who had better reason than any one else to know what his brother was capable of. He remembered no mention of the weaver between them since the time, twelve years ago, when it was their boyish sport to **deride** him; and, besides, his imagination constantly created an alibi for Dunstan: he saw him continually in some congenial haunt, to which he had walked off on leaving Wildfire--saw him **sponging** on chance acquaintances, and **meditating** a return home to the old amusement of **tormenting** his elder brother. Even if any brain in Raveloe had put the said two facts together, I doubt whether a combination so injurious to the prescriptive respectability of a family with a mural monument and venerable tankards, would not have been suppressed as of unsound tendency. But Christmas puddings, **brawn**, and abundance of **spirituous** liquors, throwing the mental originality into the channel of nightmare, are great preservatives against a dangerous spontaneity of waking thought.

When the robbery was talked of at the Rainbow and elsewhere, in good company, the balance continued to **waver** between the rational explanation founded on the tinder-box, and the theory of an impenetrable mystery that mocked investigation. The advocates of the tinder-box-and-pedlar view considered the other side a muddle-headed and **credulous** set, who, because they themselves were wall-eyed, supposed everybody else to have the same blank outlook; and the adherents of the inexplicable more than hinted that their antagonists were animals inclined to crow before they had found any corn--mere skimming-dishes in point of depth--whose clear-sightedness consisted in supposing there was nothing behind a barn-door because they couldn't see through it; so that, though their controversy did not serve to elicit the fact concerning the robbery, it elicited some true opinions of collateral importance.

But while poor Silas's loss served thus to brush the slow current of Raveloe conversation, Silas himself was feeling the withering desolation of that bereavement about which his neighbours were arguing at their ease. To any one who had observed him before he lost his gold, it might have seemed that so withered and **shrunken** a life as his could hardly be susceptible of a bruise, could

Thesaurus

brawn: (*n*) beef, strength, force, sinew, power, might, meat, flesh, muscles, vigor, energy. ANTONYMS: (*n*) weakness, leanness, scrawniness.
credulous: (*adj*) gullible, unsuspecting, simple, unsuspicious, unquestioning, green, trusting, unwary, innocent, believing, illogical. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) suspicious, wary, disbelieving, suspecting, skeptical, cynical, untrusting, shrewd, rational, smart, mistrustful.
deride: (*v*) mock, gibe, taunt, banter, insult, scoff, make fun of, laugh at, disparage, poke fun at; (*n, v*) scorn. ANTONYMS: (*v*) flatter, commend, esteem, compliment, respect, admire, approve.
meditating: (*n*) conception.
shrunken: (*adj*) wizened, shrivelled, shrunk, withered, contracted, wizen, narrow, dried, thin, lean, sear. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) plump, bloated.
spirituous: (*adj*) spiritous, intoxicating, heady.
sponging: (*n*) shrinking, bath; (*adj*) scrounging, bloodsucking, freeloading, leechlike.
tormenting: (*v*) bothering, teasing, pestering, harassing; (*adj*) harrowing, perturbing, plaguy, raging, upsetting, vexatious; (*adj, v*) worrying.
waver: (*v*) vacillate, fluctuate, hesitate, totter, hover, wave; (*n, v*) quiver, flicker, shake, flutter, tremble. ANTONYMS: (*v*) resolve, continue.

hardly endure any **subtraction** but such as would put an end to it altogether. But in reality it had been an eager life, filled with immediate purpose which **fenced** him in from the wide, **cheerless** unknown. It had been a clinging life; and though the object round which its fibres had clung was a dead **disrupted** thing, it satisfied the need for clinging. But now the fence was broken down--the support was snatched away. Marner's thoughts could no longer move in their old round, and were **baffled** by a blank like that which meets a plodding ant when the earth has broken away on its homeward path. The loom was there, and the weaving, and the growing pattern in the cloth; but the bright treasure in the hole under his feet was gone; the prospect of handling and counting it was gone: the evening had no phantasm of delight to still the poor soul's craving. The thought of the money he would get by his actual work could bring no joy, for its meagre image was only a fresh reminder of his loss; and hope was too heavily crushed by the sudden blow for his imagination to dwell on the growth of a new hoard from that small beginning.

He filled up the blank with grief. As he sat weaving, he every now and then moaned low, like one in pain: it was the sign that his thoughts had come round again to the sudden chasm--to the empty evening-time. And all the evening, as he sat in his loneliness by his dull fire, he leaned his elbows on his knees, and clasped his head with his hands, and moaned very low--not as one who seeks to be heard.

And yet he was not utterly forsaken in his trouble. The repulsion Marner had always created in his neighbours was partly dissipated by the new light in which this misfortune had shown him. Instead of a man who had more **cunning** than honest folks could come by, and, what was worse, had not the inclination to use that cunning in a **neighbourly** way, it was now apparent that Silas had not cunning enough to keep his own. He was generally spoken of as a "poor mushed creatur"; and that avoidance of his neighbours, which had before been referred to his ill-will and to a probable addiction to worse company, was now considered mere **craziness**.

Thesaurus

baffled: (*adj*) bewildered, puzzled, perplexed, confounded, at sea, frustrated, befuddled, beaten, bemused, preoccupied, helpless. ANTONYM: (*adj*) clear.
cheerless: (*adj*) sad, dismal, dark, drab, dreary, gloomy, dull, murky, dispiriting; (*adj, v*) disconsolate, joyless. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) bright, happy, uplifting, lighthearted, sunny, smart, cheery, warm.
craziness: (*n*) foolishness, folly, insanity, lunacy, mania, idiocy, distraction, frenzy, derangement; (*adj, n*) madness; (*adj*) aberration.
cunning: (*adj*) crafty, canny, adroit, wily, sly, shrewd, tricky, artful; (*n*) craftiness, craft, cleverness. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) simple, honest, stupid, unimaginative, gullible, ingenuous, straightforward, candid, sincere; (*n*) frankness, straightforwardness.
disrupted: (*adj*) disrupt.
fenced: (*adj*) hedged in, provisional, guarded, bounded.
neighbourly: (*adj*) amicable, friendly, gracious, obliging, attentive, benign, courteous, complaisant, helpful; (*adv*) neighboringly.
subtraction: (*n*) minus, withdrawal, reduction, diminution, discount, tax deduction, abatement; (*n, v*) addition, multiplication, division; (*v*) subtract. ANTONYMS: (*n*) addition, estimation, credit.

This change to a kindlier feeling was shown in various ways. The odour of Christmas cooking being on the wind, it was the season when superfluous pork and black puddings are suggestive of charity in **well**-to-do families; and Silas's misfortune had brought him **uppermost** in the memory of housekeepers like Mrs. Osgood. Mr. Crackenthorp, too, while he **admonished** Silas that his money had probably been taken from him because he thought too much of it and never came to church, enforced the doctrine by a present of pigs' pettitoes, well calculated to **dissipate** unfounded prejudices against the clerical character. Neighbours who had nothing but verbal consolation to give showed a disposition not only to greet Silas and discuss his misfortune at some length when they encountered him in the village, but also to take the trouble of calling at his cottage and getting him to repeat all the details on the very spot; and then they would try to cheer him by saying, "Well, Master Marner, you're no worse off nor other poor folks, after all; and if you was to be crippled, the parish 'ud give you a 'lowance."

I suppose one reason why we are seldom able to comfort our neighbours with our words is that our goodwill gets **adulterated**, in spite of ourselves, before it can pass our lips. We can send black puddings and pettitoes without giving them a flavour of our own **egoism**; but language is a stream that is almost sure to smack of a mingled soil. There was a fair proportion of kindness in Raveloe; but it was often of a **beery** and **bungling** sort, and took the shape least allied to the complimentary and hypocritical.

Mr. Macey, for example, coming one evening expressly to let Silas know that recent events had given him the advantage of standing more **favourably** in the opinion of a man whose judgment was not formed lightly, opened the conversation by saying, as soon as he had seated himself and adjusted his thumbs--

"Come, Master Marner, why, you've no call to sit a-moaning. You're a deal better off to ha' lost your money, nor to ha' kep it by foul means. I used to think, when you first come into these parts, as you were no better nor you should be; you were younger a deal than what you are now; but you were allays a staring,

Thesaurus

admonished: (*adj*) reprimanded, reproved, chastened.
adulterated: (*adj*) adulterate, debased, unclean, dirty, corrupted, sophisticated, watery, sham, corrupt; (*v*) contraband, surreptitious.
beery: (*n*) groggy, flustered, disguised.
bungling: (*adj*) clumsy, maladroit, incompetent, gawky, unskilled, bumbling, inept, ungainly, bunglesome, untrained, unproductive. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) competent, efficient.
dissipate: (*adj, v*) waste; (*v*) disperse, squander, disappear, diffuse, consume, scatter, disseminate, break, evaporate, spend. ANTONYMS: (*v*) save, conserve, appear, collect, hoard, absorb, gather.
egoism: (*n*) selfishness, egocentrism, self-love, trait, pride, vanity, egocentricity, egomism, narcissism, introspection, insensitivity. ANTONYMS: (*n*) selflessness, conformity.
favourably: (*adv*) advantageously, well.
uppermost: (*adj*) top, upmost, upper, highest, chief, maximum, supreme, greatest, major, outermost; (*n*) main. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) bottom, lowest, trivial, lower.
well-to-do: (*adj*) rich, well-off, affluent, opulent, prosperous, moneyed, substantial, comfortable, easy, fortunate.

white-faced creatur, partly like a bald-faced **calf**, as I may say. But there's no knowing: it isn't every queer-looksed thing as Old Harry's had the making of--I mean, speaking o' **toads** and such; for they're often harmless, like, and useful against varmin. And it's pretty much the same wi' you, as fur as I can see. Though as to the yarbs and stuff to cure the breathing, if you brought that sort o' knowledge from distant parts, you might ha' been a bit **freer** of it. And if the knowledge wasn't well come by, why, you might ha' made up for it by coming to church reg'lar; for, as for the children as the Wise Woman **charmed**, I've been at the christening of 'em again and again, and they took the water just as well. And that's reasonable; for if Old Harry's a mind to do a bit o' kindness for a holiday, like, who's got anything against it? That's my thinking; and I've been clerk o' this parish forty year, and I know, when the parson and me does the **cussing** of a Ash Wednesday, there's no cussing o' folks as have a mind to be cured without a doctor, let Kimble say what he will. And so, Master Marner, as I was saying--for there's windings i' things as they may carry you to the fur end o' the prayer-book afore you get back to 'em--my advice is, as you keep up your sperrits; for as for thinking you're a deep un, and ha' got more inside you nor 'ull bear daylight, I'm not o' that opinion at all, and so I tell the **neighbours**. For, says I, you talk o' Master Marner making out a tale--why, it's nonsense, that is: it 'ud take a 'cute man to make a tale like that; and, says I, he looked as scared as a rabbit."

During this **discursive** address Silas had continued **motionless** in his previous attitude, leaning his elbows on his knees, and pressing his hands against his head. Mr. Macey, not **doubting** that he had been listened to, paused, in the expectation of some **appreciatory** reply, but Marner remained silent. He had a sense that the old man meant to be good-natured and neighbourly; but the kindness fell on him as sunshine falls on the wretched--he had no heart to taste it, and felt that it was very far off him.

"Come, Master Marner, have you got nothing to say to that?" said Mr. Macey at last, with a slight accent of **impatience**.

Thesaurus

appreciatory: (*adj*) thankful, grateful.
calf: (*n*) calves, calfskin, sura, foal, shorthorn, pup, kitten, colt, leather, kid, box calf.
charmed: (*adj*) enchanted, delighted, fascinated, spellbound, entranced, captive, beguiled, infatuated, absorbed, enamored, captive hours.
cussing: (*n*) curse, execration, profanity, swear word.
discursive: (*adj, v*) excursive, discursory; (*adj*) diffuse, desultory, dianoetic, indirect, discoursive, digressive; (*v*) ambulatory, monadic, vagrant.
doubting: (*adj*) doubtful, distrustful, disbelieving, incredulous, doubt, skeptical, suspicious, sceptical, wary, doubts, distrusting. ANTONYM: (*adj*) credulous.
freer: (*adj*) unconfined.
impatience: (*n*) annoyance, eagerness, anger, intolerance, restlessness, fidget, nervousness, fidgetiness, enthusiasm, edginess; (*adj*) nonendurance. ANTONYMS: (*n*) calmness, endurance, apathy.
motionless: (*adj*) inactive, inert, immobile, stationary, fixed, unmoving, quiescent, dead, torpid; (*adj, adv*) calm, at rest. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) mobile, active, alive, flowing.
neighbours: (*n*) neighborhood.
toads: (*n*) caecilians, class Amphibia, frogs, newts, salamanders.

"Oh," said Marner, slowly, shaking his head between his hands, "I thank you--thank you--kindly."

"Aye, aye, to be sure: I thought you would," said Mr. Macey; "and my advice is--have you got a Sunday suit?"

"No," said Marner.

"I **doubted** it was so," said Mr. Macey. "Now, let me advise you to get a Sunday suit: there's Tookey, he's a poor creatur, but he's got my **tailoring** business, and some o' my money in it, and he shall make a suit at a low price, and give you trust, and then you can come to church, and be a bit neighbourly. Why, you've never heared me say "Amen" since you come into these parts, and I recommend you to lose no time, for it'll be poor work when Tookey has it all to himself, for I mayn't be equil to stand i' the desk at all, come another winter." Here Mr. Macey paused, perhaps expecting some sign of emotion in his **hearer**; but not **observing** any, he went on. "And as for the money for the suit o' clothes, why, you get a matter of a pound a-week at your **weaving**, Master Marner, and you're a young man, eh, for all you look so mushed. Why, you couldn't ha' been five-and-twenty when you come into these parts, eh?"

Silas started a little at the change to a questioning tone, and answered mildly, "I don't know; I can't rightly say--it's a long while since."

After receiving such an answer as this, it is not surprising that Mr. Macey observed, later on in the evening at the Rainbow, that Marner's head was "all of a muddle", and that it was to be doubted if he ever knew when Sunday came round, which showed him a worse **heathen** than many a dog.

Another of Silas's comforters, besides Mr. Macey, came to him with a mind highly charged on the same topic. This was Mrs. Winthrop, the wheelwright's wife. The inhabitants of Raveloe were not severely regular in their church-going, and perhaps there was hardly a person in the parish who would not have held that to go to church every Sunday in the calendar would have shown a **greedy** desire to stand well with Heaven, and get an **undue** advantage over their neighbours-- a wish to be better than the "common run", that would have

Thesaurus

doubted: (*adj*) distrusted, suspected.
greedy: (*adj*) avid, gluttonous, desirous, grasping, acquisitive, glutton, piggish, voracious, selfish; (*adj, v*) avaricious, covetous. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) temperate, ascetic, unconcerned, abstemious, moderate.
hearer: (*n*) audience, listener, eavesdropper, observer, perceiver, earwitness, attendant, attendee, attender, audient, beholder.
heathen: (*adj, n*) gentile, ethnic; (*n*) infidel, idolater, paynim, heretic; (*adj*) heathenish, irreligious, giaour, godless, barbaric.
observing: (*adj*) observant, mindful, watchful, commemorative, conscious, observative, perceptive, thoughtful; (*n*) investigation.
tailoring: (*n*) dressmaking, adapt, rag trade, craft, customization, equipage, foppery, frippery, man millinery, couture, millinery.
undue: (*adj*) excessive, immoderate, unreasonable, unwarranted, inordinate, extravagant, exorbitant, extreme, unfair, improper, unjustified. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) reasonable, due, appropriate, sensible, justified, just, fair.
weaving: (*adj*) lurching, staggering, walking unsteadily, unstable, stupefying, irregular, astounding, unsteady; (*n*) braiding, creating from raw materials, aspect weaving.

implied a reflection on those who had had godfathers and godmothers as well as themselves, and had an equal right to the burying-service. At the same time, it was understood to be requisite for all who were not household **servants**, or young men, to take the sacrament at one of the great festivals: Squire Cass himself took it on Christmas-day; while those who were held to be "good livers" went to church with greater, though still with moderate, frequency.

Mrs. Winthrop was one of these: she was in all respects a woman of scrupulous conscience, so eager for duties that life seemed to offer them too **scantily** unless she rose at half-past four, though this threw a scarcity of work over the more advanced hours of the morning, which it was a constant problem with her to remove. Yet she had not the **vixenish** temper which is sometimes supposed to be a necessary condition of such habits: she was a very mild, patient woman, whose nature it was to seek out all the **sadder** and more serious elements of life, and pasture her mind upon them. She was the person always first thought of in Raveloe when there was illness or death in a family, when **leeches** were to be applied, or there was a sudden disappointment in a monthly nurse. She was a "comfortable woman"--good-looking, fresh-complexioned, having her lips always slightly screwed, as if she felt herself in a sick-room with the doctor or the clergyman present. But she was never **whimpering**; no one had seen her shed tears; she was simply grave and inclined to shake her head and sigh, almost **imperceptibly**, like a funereal **mourner** who is not a relation. It seemed surprising that Ben Winthrop, who loved his quart-pot and his joke, got along so well with Dolly; but she took her husband's jokes and **joviality** as patiently as everything else, considering that "men *would* be so", and viewing the stronger sex in the light of animals whom it had pleased Heaven to make naturally troublesome, like bulls and turkey-cocks.

This good wholesome woman could hardly fail to have her mind drawn strongly towards Silas Marner, now that he appeared in the light of a sufferer; and one Sunday afternoon she took her little boy **Aaron** with her, and went to call on Silas, carrying in her hand some small lard-cakes, flat paste-like articles much **esteemed** in Raveloe. Aaron, an apple-cheeked youngster of seven, with a

Thesaurus

aaron: (*n*) hank Aaron.
esteemed: (*adj*) dear, reputable, respected, honorable, noble, honored, prestigious, important, distinguished, August, respect. ANTONYM: (*adj*) disreputable.
imperceptibly: (*adv*) unnoticeably, gradually, slightly, invisibly, gently, quietly, softly, observably, indistinctly, scarcely, hardly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) obviously, visibly, audibly, conspicuously, perceptibly, heavily, clearly, strongly.
joviality: (*n*) glee, cheerfulness, happiness, mirth, merriment, gaiety, festivity, conviviality, hilarity, geniality; (*adj*) jocundity. ANTONYMS: (*n*) misery, sadness.
leeches: (*n*) cupping, bleeding, venesection, phylum Annelida, Annelida, phlebotomy.
mourner: (*n*) sorrower, bearer, griever, unfortunate, pallbearer, wailer, weeper.
sadder: (*adj*) doleful.
scantily: (*adv*) sparingly, scarcely, poorly, sparsely, insufficiently, skimpily, meagerly, scantly, slenderly, sparely; (*adj, adv*) thinly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) plentifully, profusely, fully.
servants: (*n*) staff, suite.
vixenish: (*adj*) malicious, vixenly.
whimpering: (*adj*) whining, puling, childish, querulous; (*n*) sniveling, cry, tear.

clean **starched frill** which looked like a plate for the apples, needed all his adventurous curiosity to **embolden** him against the possibility that the **big**-eyed weaver might do him some bodily injury; and his **dubiety** was much increased when, on arriving at the Stone-pits, they heard the mysterious sound of the loom.

"Ah, it is as I thought," said Mrs. Winthrop, sadly.

They had to knock loudly before Silas heard them; but when he did come to the door he showed no impatience, as he would once have done, at a visit that had been **unasked** for and unexpected. Formerly, his heart had been as a locked **casket** with its treasure inside; but now the casket was empty, and the lock was broken. Left **groping** in darkness, with his prop utterly gone, Silas had inevitably a sense, though a dull and half-despairing one, that if any help came to him it must come from without; and there was a slight stirring of expectation at the sight of his fellow-men, a faint consciousness of dependence on their goodwill. He opened the door wide to admit Dolly, but without otherwise returning her greeting than by moving the armchair a few inches as a sign that she was to sit down in it. Dolly, as soon as she was seated, removed the white cloth that covered her lard-cakes, and said in her gravest way--

"I'd a baking yisterday, Master Marner, and the lard-cakes turned out better nor common, and I'd ha' asked you to accept some, if you'd thought well. I don't eat such things myself, for a bit o' bread's what I like from one year's end to the other; but men's stomichs are made so comical, they want a change--they do, I know, God help 'em."

Dolly sighed gently as she held out the cakes to Silas, who thanked her kindly and looked very close at them, absently, being accustomed to look so at everything he took into his hand--eyed all the while by the wondering bright orbs of the small Aaron, who had made an **outwork** of his mother's chair, and was **peeping** round from behind it.

"There's letters pricked on 'em," said Dolly. "I can't read 'em myself, and there's nobody, not Mr. Macey himself, rightly knows what they mean; but

Thesaurus

big-eyed: (*adj*) inquisitive.
casket: (*n*) box, coffin, chest, sarcophagus, coffer, caddy, bier, gasket, reliquary, desk; (*v*) enclose.
dubiety: (*n*) disbelief, doubtfulness, uncertainty, suspicion, dubiousness, suspense, irresolution, incertitude, misgiving, indecision, question. ANTONYM: (*n*) certitude.
embolden: (*adj, n, v*) encourage; (*v*) hearten, animate, comfort, inspire, enhearten, nerve, strengthen; (*n*) buoy up, assure; (*adj, n*) reassure.
frill: (*n*) flounce, adornment, embellishment, frills, luxury, furbelow, fringe, trimming, frame; (*n, v*) ruffle, disturbance.
groping: (*adj*) fumbling, gropingly, investigative, incertain, blind, probing, tentative, uncertain, unsure, hesitant, exploratory.
outwork: (*v*) advance work, horn work; (*n*) bulwark, frontier, defence, homework, defense, defensive structure.
peeping: (*n*) cheeping, tweeting, chirping; (*adj*) inquisitive.
starched: (*adj*) formal, starch, punctilious, ceremonious, majestic, solemn, inflexible, prim, stately, severe, ritual.
unasked: (*adj*) unwelcome, unwanted, unbidden, unsought, uncalled, wanton, voluntary, unrequested, willing, superfluous, spontaneous. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) invited, solicited.

they've a good meaning, for they're the same as is on the pulpit-cloth at church. What are they, Aaron, my dear?"

Aaron retreated completely behind his outwork.

"Oh, go, that's naughty," said his mother, **mildly**. "Well, whativer the letters are, they've a good meaning; and it's a stamp as has been in our house, Ben says, ever since he was a little un, and his mother used to put it on the cakes, and I've allays put it on too; for if there's any good, we've need of it i' this world."

"It's I. H. S.," said Silas, at which proof of learning Aaron peeped round the chair again.

"Well, to be sure, you can read 'em off," said Dolly. "Ben's read 'em to me many and many a time, but they slip out o' my mind again; the more's the pity, for they're good letters, else they wouldn't be in the church; and so I **prick** 'em on all the loaves and all the cakes, though sometimes they won't hold, because o' the rising--for, as I said, if there's any good to be got we've need of it i' this world--that we have; and I hope they'll bring good to you, Master Marner, for it's wi' that will I brought you the cakes; and you see the letters have held better nor common."

Silas was as unable to interpret the letters as Dolly, but there was no possibility of **misunderstanding** the desire to give comfort that made itself heard in her quiet tones. He said, with more feeling than before--"Thank you--thank you kindly." But he laid down the cakes and seated himself absently--drearily unconscious of any distinct benefit towards which the cakes and the letters, or even Dolly's **kindness**, could tend for him.

"Ah, if there's good **anywhere**, we've need of it," repeated Dolly, who did not lightly forsake a **serviceable** phrase. She looked at Silas pityingly as she went on. "But you didn't hear the church-bells this morning, Master Marner? I doubt you didn't know it was Sunday. Living so lone here, you lose your count, I daresay; and then, when your loom makes a noise, you can't hear the bells, more partic'lar now the frost kills the sound."

Thesaurus

anywhere: (*adv, n*) anyplace; (*adv*) someplace, wherever, everywhere.
kindness: (*n*) generosity, clemency, compassion, grace, good will, graciousness, humanity, goodness, affection; (*adj, n*) courtesy, gentleness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) miserliness, spite, nastiness, callousness, cruelty, unfriendliness, maliciousness, thoughtlessness, sourness, severity, disservice.
mildly: (*adv*) moderately, placidly, gently, tenderly, graciously, softly, lightly, kindly, calmly, sweetly, suavely. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) passionately, intensely, extremely, enormously, pithily, powerfully, harshly, severely, considerably.
misunderstanding: (*n*) misapprehension, disagreement, misconception, misinterpretation, error, misconstruction, dispute, quarrel, mistaking; (*n, v*) dissension, difference. ANTONYMS: (*n*) harmony, fact, agreement, understanding.
prick: (*n, v*) puncture, stab, cock, twinge, spur, bite; (*v*) impale, pierce, needle; (*n*) Dick, pricking.
serviceable: (*adj*) practical, helpful, handy, profitable, beneficial, effective, useful, convenient, efficient, operative, practicable. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) impractical, unusable, unserviceable, useless, flimsy, worthless.

"Yes, I did; I heard 'em," said Silas, to whom Sunday bells were a mere accident of the day, and not part of its **sacredness**. There had been no bells in Lantern Yard.

"Dear heart!" said Dolly, pausing before she spoke again. "But what a pity it is you should work of a Sunday, and not clean yourself--if you *didn't* go to church; for if you'd a roasting bit, it might be as you couldn't leave it, being a lone man. But there's the bakehus, if you could make up your mind to spend a **twopence** on the oven now and then,--not every week, in course--I shouldn't like to do that myself,--you might carry your bit o' dinner there, for it's nothing but right to have a bit o' summat hot of a Sunday, and not to make it as you can't know your dinner from Saturday. But now, upo' Christmas-day, this blessed Christmas as is ever coming, if you was to take your dinner to the bakehus, and go to church, and see the holly and the yew, and hear the anthim, and then take the sacramen', you'd be a deal the better, and you'd know which end you stood on, and you could put your trust i' Them as knows better nor we do, seein' you'd ha' done what it lies on us all to do."

Dolly's **exhortation**, which was an unusually long effort of speech for her, was uttered in the soothing persuasive tone with which she would have tried to **prevail** on a sick man to take his medicine, or a basin of **gruel** for which he had no appetite. Silas had never before been closely urged on the point of his absence from church, which had only been thought of as a part of his general **queerness**; and he was too direct and simple to **evade** Dolly's appeal.

"Nay, nay," he said, "I know nothing o' church. I've never been to church."

"No!" said Dolly, in a low tone of **wonderment**. Then bethinking herself of Silas's advent from an unknown country, she said, "Could it ha' been as they'd no church where you was born?"

"Oh, yes," said Silas, **meditatively**, sitting in his usual posture of leaning on his knees, and supporting his head. "There was churches--a many--it was a big town. But I knew nothing of 'em-- I went to chapel."

Thesaurus

evade: (*v*) escape, avoid, parry, dodge, skirt, duck, sidestep, circumvent, hedge, fudge; (*adj, v*) equivocate. ANTONYMS: (*v*) face, address, accept, meet, acquire.

exhortation: (*n*) warning, monition, persuasion, suggestion, counsel, incitement, sermon, admonition, exhort, hortation, admonishment.

gruel: (*n*) mess, congee, loblolly, paste, waste, porridge, mush, pap, skilly, wet feed.

meditatively: (*adv*) thoughtfully, reflectively, wistfully, musingly, contemplatively, ponderingly, ruminatively, broodingly, thinkingly, broodily, musefully. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) unthinkingly, rashly.

prevail: (*n, v*) triumph, control, govern; (*v*) dominate, overcome, outweigh, obtain, persist, carry, vanquish; (*adj*) preponderate. ANTONYM: (*v*) lose.

queerness: (*n*) peculiarity, crotchet, quirkiness, quirk, eccentricity, oddness, unfamiliarity, strangeness, singularity, mannerism, hook.

sacredness: (*n*) sanctity, inviolability, godliness, saintliness, innocence, piety, devotion, blessedness, sanctitude, righteousness, goodness.

twopence: (*n*) tuppence, coin.

wonderment: (*n*) wonder, admiration, amazement, astonishment, surprise, awe, bewilderment, marvel, curiosity, annus Mirabilis, esteem.

Dolly was much puzzled at this new word, but she was rather afraid of **inquiring** further, lest "chapel" might mean some haunt of **wickedness**. After a little thought, she said--

"Well, Master Marner, it's niver too late to turn over a new leaf, and if you've niver had no church, there's no telling the good it'll do you. For I feel so set up and comfortable as niver was, when I've been and heard the prayers, and the singing to the praise and glory o' God, as Mr. Macey gives out--and Mr. Crackenthorp saying good words, and more partic'lar on Sacramen' Day; and if a bit o' trouble comes, I feel as I can put up wi' it, for I've looked for help i' the right quarter, and gev myself up to Them as we must all give ourselves up to at the last; and if we'n done our part, it isn't to be believed as Them as are above us 'ull be worse nor we are, and come short o' Their'n."

Poor Dolly's exposition of her simple Raveloe theology fell rather **unmeaningly** on Silas's ears, for there was no word in it that could **rouse** a memory of what he had known as religion, and his comprehension was quite baffled by the **plural pronoun**, which was no heresy of Dolly's, but only her way of **avoiding** a **presumptuous** familiarity. He remained silent, not feeling inclined to assent to the part of Dolly's speech which he fully understood--her recommendation that he should go to church. Indeed, Silas was so unaccustomed to talk beyond the brief questions and answers necessary for the transaction of his simple business, that words did not easily come to him without the urgency of a distinct purpose.

But now, little Aaron, having become used to the weaver's awful presence, had advanced to his mother's side, and Silas, seeming to notice him for the first time, tried to return Dolly's signs of good-will by offering the lad a bit of lard-cake. Aaron **shrank** back a little, and rubbed his head against his mother's shoulder, but still thought the piece of cake worth the risk of putting his hand out for it.

"Oh, for shame, Aaron," said his mother, taking him on her lap, however; "why, you don't want cake again yet **awhile**. He's wonderful hearty," she went on, with a little sigh--"that he is, God knows. He's my youngest, and we spoil

Thesaurus

avoiding: (*n*) shunning; (*adj*) fugitive, antisocial.
awhile: (*adj*) in transitu, en passant; (*adv*) briefly.
inquiring: (*adj*) inquisitive, quizzical, interested, analytical, probing, intrusive; (*adj, n*) questioning; (*v*) inquire; (*n*) enquiry, question, examination. ANTONYM: (*adj*) uninquiring.
plural: (*adj*) upwards of, several, certain.
presumptuous: (*adj*) arrogant, audacious, forward, assuming, insolent, impertinent, assumptive, familiar, haughty, proud; (*adj, n*) bold. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) respectful, shy, timid, humble, modest.
pronoun: (*n*) function word, anaphoric pronoun, personal pronoun.
rouse: (*v*) provoke, excite, arouse, kindle, awaken, instigate, actuate, disturb, move, agitate, incite. ANTONYMS: (*v*) dampen, dishearten, suppress, douse, inhibit, stifle, quench.
shrank: (*v*) minify.
unmeaningly: (*adv*) senselessly, insignificantly.
wickedness: (*n*) depravity, sin, sinfulness, iniquity, harm, ill, vice, evilness, corruption, immorality, crime. ANTONYMS: (*n*) goodness, kindness, piety, righteousness, benevolence, religiousness, obedience, good.

him sadly, for either me or the father must allays hev him in our sight--that we must."

She stroked Aaron's brown head, and thought it must do Master Marner good to see such a "pictur of a child". But Marner, on the other side of the hearth, saw the neat-featured rosy face as a mere dim round, with two dark spots in it.

"And he's got a voice like a bird--you wouldn't think," Dolly went on; "he can sing a Christmas carril as his father's taught him; and I take it for a token as he'll come to good, as he can learn the good tunes so quick. Come, Aaron, stan' up and sing the carril to Master Marner, come."

Aaron replied by rubbing his forehead against his mother's shoulder.

"Oh, that's naughty," said Dolly, gently. "Stan' up, when mother tells you, and let me hold the cake till you've done."

Aaron was not indisposed to display his talents, even to an **ogre**, under protecting circumstances; and after a few more signs of **coyness**, consisting chiefly in rubbing the backs of his hands over his eyes, and then peeping between them at Master Marner, to see if he looked anxious for the "carril", he at length allowed his head to be duly adjusted, and standing behind the table, which let him appear above it only as far as his broad frill, so that he looked like a **cherubic** head **untroubled** with a body, he began with a clear **chirp**, and in a melody that had the rhythm of an **industrious** hammer—

"God rest you, merry gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
For Jesus Christ our Savior
Was born on Christmas-day."

Dolly listened with a devout look, **glancing** at Marner in some confidence that this strain would help to **allure** him to church.

Thesaurus

allure: (*n, v*) tempt, decoy, lure, appeal, draw, entice, seduce; (*v*) attract, persuade; (*n*) attraction, charisma. ANTONYMS: (*n*) repulsion, ugliness, repulsiveness; (*v*) repel, dissuade, discourage, threaten, warn, deter, prevent.
cherubic: (*adj*) seraphic, angelical, heavenly, cherubical, lovable, saintly, innocent, holy, sweet, beatific, cherubin.
chirp: (*n, v*) chirrup, peep; (*v*) sing, trill, chitter, warble, carol, emit, whistle, utter; (*adj*) take heart.
coyness: (*n*) shyness, bashfulness, modesty, demureness, restraint, timidity, diffidence, accismus, backwardness, coldness, control. ANTONYM: (*n*) confidence.
glancing: (*adj*) passing.
industrious: (*adj*) diligent, assiduous, indefatigable, busy, energetic, hardworking, laborious, tireless, earnest, keen, enterprising. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) indolent, idle, destructive, weary, careless.
ogre: (*n*) fiend, giant, demon, devil, brute, bloodsucker, specter, vulture; (*adj*) Gorgon, nightmare, mormo.
untroubled: (*adj*) calm, quiet, peaceful, composed, carefree, serene, unworried, clear, still, undisturbed; (*adj, v*) smooth. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) anxious, turbulent, uneasy, worried, insecure, disturbed, unnerved, strict, heavy, bothered, perturbed.

"That's Christmas music," she said, when Aaron had ended, and had secured his piece of cake again. "There's no other music equil to the Christmas music--"Hark the erol angils sing." And you may judge what it is at church, Master Marner, with the **bassoon** and the voices, as you can't help thinking you've got to a better place a'ready--for I wouldn't speak ill o' this world, seeing as Them put us in it as knows best--but what wi' the drink, and the quarrelling, and the bad illnesses, and the hard dying, as I've seen times and times, one's **thankful** to hear of a better. The boy sings pretty, don't he, Master Marner?"

"Yes," said Silas, absently, "very pretty."

The Christmas carol, with its hammer-like rhythm, had fallen on his ears as strange music, quite unlike a **hymn**, and could have none of the effect Dolly **contemplated**. But he wanted to show her that he was grateful, and the only mode that occurred to him was to offer Aaron a bit more cake.

"Oh, no, thank you, Master Marner," said Dolly, holding down Aaron's willing hands. "We must be going home now. And so I wish you good-bye, Master Marner; and if you ever feel anyways bad in your inside, as you can't **fend** for yourself, I'll come and clean up for you, and get you a bit o' victual, and willing. But I beg and pray of you to leave off weaving of a Sunday, for it's bad for soul and body--and the money as comes i' that way 'ull be a bad bed to lie down on at the last, if it doesn't fly away, nobody knows where, like the white frost. And you'll excuse me being that free with you, Master Marner, for I wish you well--I do. Make your bow, Aaron."

Silas said "Good-bye, and thank you kindly," as he opened the door for Dolly, but he couldn't help feeling relieved when she was gone-- relieved that he might **weave** again and **moan** at his ease. Her simple view of life and its **comforts**, by which she had tried to cheer him, was only like a report of unknown **objects**, which his imagination could not fashion. The fountains of human love and of faith in a divine love had not yet been unlocked, and his soul was still the shrunken rivulet, with only this difference, that its little groove of sand was blocked up, and it wandered **confusedly** against dark obstruction.

Thesaurus

bassoon: (*n*) basset horn, serpent, contrafagotto, double bassoon, oboe, corno di bassetto, cor anglais, bass clarinet, corno Inglese, hautboy.
comforts: (*n*) amenities, bread and butter, convenience, conveniences.
confusedly: (*adv*) obscurely, disorderedly, perplexedly, cloudily, dazedly, befuddledly, muddily, bemusedly, dizzily, bewilderedly, puzzledly.
contemplated: (*adj*) intended, willful.
fend: (*v*) repel, resist, dispel, guard, counteract, obstruct, ward off, protect, safeguard, fend off; (*n*) fen.
hymn: (*n*) song, canticle, chant, anthem, carol, chorale, doxology; (*v*) glorify, laud, sing, extol.
moan: (*n, v*) grumble, gripe, whine, lament, cry, howl; (*v*) bewail, complain, mourn; (*n*) complaint, lamentation. ANTONYMS: (*v*) compliment; (*n*) praise.
objects: (*n*) things, stuff, matter, material, substance.
thankful: (*adj*) appreciative, indebted, beholden, obliged, contented, pleased, gratified, relieved, under obligation, appreciatory, welcome. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) worried, unappreciative, unthankful, sorry.
weave: (*v*) twine, braid, knit, entwine, interweave, wind, waver, plait, fabricate, inweave; (*n*) texture. ANTONYMS: (*v*) separate, unweave, unpick.

And so, notwithstanding the honest persuasions of Mr. Macey and Dolly Winthrop, Silas spent his Christmas-day in loneliness, eating his meat in sadness of heart, though the meat had come to him as a neighbourly present. In the morning he looked out on the black frost that seemed to press **cruelly** on every blade of grass, while the half-icy red pool shivered under the bitter wind; but towards evening the snow began to fall, and curtained from him even that dreary outlook, shutting him close up with his narrow grief. And he sat in his robbed home through the livelong evening, not caring to close his shutters or lock his door, pressing his head between his hands and moaning, till the cold grasped him and told him that his fire was grey.

Nobody in this world but himself knew that he was the same Silas Marner who had once loved his fellow with tender love, and trusted in an unseen goodness. Even to himself that past experience had become dim.

But in Raveloe village the bells rang **merrily**, and the church was **fuller** than all through the rest of the year, with red faces among the abundant dark-green boughs--faces prepared for a longer service than usual by an **odorous** breakfast of toast and ale. Those green boughs, the hymn and **anthem** never heard but at Christmas-- even the Athanasian Creed, which was discriminated from the others only as being longer and of exceptional virtue, since it was only read on rare occasions--brought a vague **exulting** sense, for which the grown men could as little have found words as the children, that something great and mysterious had been done for them in heaven above and in earth below, which they were **appropriating** by their presence. And then the red faces made their way through the black biting frost to their own homes, feeling themselves free for the rest of the day to eat, drink, and be merry, and using that Christian freedom without **diffidence**.

At Squire Cass's family party that day nobody mentioned Dunstan-- nobody was sorry for his absence, or feared it would be too long. The doctor and his wife, uncle and aunt Kimble, were there, and the annual Christmas talk was carried through without any omissions, rising to the climax of Mr. Kimble's experience when he walked the London hospitals thirty years back, together with striking

Thesaurus

anthem: (*n*) song, hymn, chorale, canticle, chant, choral, carol, psalm, paean, national anthem, chaunt.
appropriating: (*n*) capture.
cruelly: (*adv*) harshly, ferociously, fiercely, viciously, inhumanly, mercilessly, pitilessly, heartlessly, roughly, unkindly; (*adj, adv*) bitterly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) kindly, mercifully, sympathetically, tamely, peacefully, humanely, compassionately, sensitively, respectfully, innocently, genially.
diffidence: (*n*) reserve, modesty, shyness, pudency, coyness, timorousness, doubt, humility, timidity, uncertainty, constraint. ANTONYMS: (*n*) approachability, arrogance, security, brashness.
exulting: (*adj*) jubilant, flushed, triumphant, experiencing triumph, rejoicing, prideful, elated, disdainful, triumphal; (*v*) exult; (*n*) joy.
fuller: (*adj*) rotund; (*n*) roller; (*v*) tucker.
merrily: (*adv*) gaily, cheerfully, blithely, cheerily, gladly, gleefully, mirthfully, brightly, jovially, joyfully, gayly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) sadly, anxiously, miserably, unhappily, carefully, despondently.
odorous: (*adj*) fragrant, odoriferous, aromatic, balmy, scented, sweet, redolent, perfumed, odorant, malodorous, fragrance. ANTONYM: (*adj*) smelly.

professional anecdotes then gathered. Whereupon cards followed, with aunt Kimble's annual failure to follow suit, and uncle Kimble's **irascibility** concerning the odd trick which was rarely **explicable** to him, when it was not on his side, without a general visitation of tricks to see that they were formed on sound principles: the whole being accompanied by a strong steaming odour of spirits-and-water.

But the party on Christmas-day, being a strictly family party, was not the **pre**-eminently brilliant celebration of the season at the Red House. It was the great dance on New Year's Eve that made the glory of Squire Cass's hospitality, as of his forefathers', time out of mind. This was the occasion when all the society of Raveloe and Tarley, whether old **acquaintances** separated by long rutty distances, or cooled acquaintances separated by misunderstandings concerning runaway calves, or acquaintances founded on intermittent condescension, counted on meeting and on comporting themselves with mutual **appropriateness**. This was the occasion on which fair dames who came on pillions sent their bandboxes before them, supplied with more than their evening costume; for the feast was not to end with a single evening, like a **paltry** town entertainment, where the whole supply of eatables is put on the table at once, and bedding is **scanty**. The Red House was provisioned as if for a siege; and as for the spare feather-beds ready to be laid on floors, they were as plentiful as might naturally be expected in a family that had killed its own geese for many generations.

Godfrey Cass was looking forward to this New Year's Eve with a foolish reckless longing, that made him half deaf to his **importunate** companion, Anxiety.

"Dunsey will be coming home soon: there will be a great blow-up, and how will you bribe his spite to silence?" said Anxiety.

"Oh, he won't come home before New Year's Eve, perhaps," said Godfrey; "and I shall sit by Nancy then, and dance with her, and get a kind look from her in spite of herself."

Thesaurus

acquaintances: (*n*) associates.
appropriateness: (*n*) propriety, appositeness, decency, felicitousness, fitness, convenience, correctness, felicity, rightness, suitability, adequacy. ANTONYMS: (*n*) unsuitability, insignificance, incorrectness.
explicable: (*adj*) understandable, explainable, interpretable, answerable, justifiable, comprehensible. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) inexcusable, mysterious, incomprehensible.
importunate: (*adj*) annoying, exigent, pressing, insistent, bothersome, pestiferous, pestilent, instant, obdurate, demanding, pleading. ANTONYM: (*adj*) feeble.
irascibility: (*n*) irascibleness, touchiness, temper, acrimony, testiness, irritability, asperity, spleen, edginess, quick temper, bad temper.
paltry: (*adj, n*) mean; (*adj*) contemptible, measly, trifling, abject, insignificant, inconsiderable, puny, little, trivial, low. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) generous, substantial, plentiful, enormous, important, profound.
pre-eminently: (*adv*) principally, eminently.
scanty: (*adj*) insufficient, few, inadequate, bare, deficient, poor, narrow, scant, light; (*adj, v*) spare, lean. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) generous, abundant, ample, strong.

"But money is wanted in another quarter," said Anxiety, in a louder voice, "and how will you get it without **selling** your mother's **diamond** pin? And if you don't get it...?"

"Well, but something may happen to make things easier. At any rate, there's one pleasure for me close at hand: Nancy is coming."

"Yes, and suppose your father should bring **matters** to a pass that will **oblige** you to decline marrying her--and to give your reasons?"

"Hold your **tongue**, and don't worry me. I can see Nancy's eyes, just as they will look at me, and feel her hand in mine already."

But Anxiety went on, though in **noisy** Christmas company; **refusing** to be **utterly quieted** even by much drinking.

Thesaurus

diamond: (*n*) lozenge, infield, square, rhombus, rectangle, ball field, carbonado, baseball diamond; (*adj*) brilliant, jewel, bijou.
matters: (*n*) affairs, materials, dealings, proceedings.
noisy: (*adj*) boisterous, loud, vociferous, clamorous, turbulent, tumultuous, strident, blatant, shrill, rowdy, vocal. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) silent, peaceful, tranquil, calm, noiseless, soft, restrained, placid, orderly, gentle.
oblige: (*v*) coerce, force, drive, constrain, make, bind, accommodate, obligate, necessitate, enforce, impel. ANTONYMS: (*v*) displease, request, hinder.
quieted: (*adj*) composed.
refusing: (*adj*) negative, dismissive, denying, recusative, noncompliant.
selling: (*n*) marketing, business, disposal, vending, capitalisation, capitalization, commerce, merchandising, transaction, resale, retailing.
tongue: (*n*) lingua, speech, idiom, dialect, clapper, glossa, natural language, striker, talk; (*v*) lick; (*adj*) flowing.
utterly: (*adv*) completely, absolutely, totally, entirely, extremely, altogether, expressly, purely, dead, fully, wholly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) partly, uncertain, slightly, incompletely, hardly, somewhat.

CHAPTER XI

Some **women**, I grant, would not appear to advantage seated on a **pillion**, and **attired** in a **drab** joseph and a drab beaver-bonnet, with a crown resembling a small stew-pan; for a garment suggesting a coachman's **greatcoat**, cut out under an **exiguity** of cloth that would only allow of miniature capes, is not well adapted to conceal deficiencies of **contour**, nor is drab a colour that will throw **sallow** cheeks into lively contrast. It was all the greater triumph to Miss Nancy Lammeter's beauty that she looked thoroughly **bewitching** in that **costume**, as, seated on the pillion behind her tall, erect father, she held one arm round him, and looked down, with **open**-eyed anxiety, at the treacherous snow-covered pools and puddles, which sent up formidable splashings of mud under the stamp of Dobbin's foot. A painter would, perhaps, have preferred her in those moments when she was free from **self**-consciousness; but certainly the bloom on her cheeks was at its highest point of contrast with the surrounding drab when she arrived at the door of the Red House, and saw Mr. Godfrey Cass ready to lift her from the pillion. She wished her sister Priscilla had come up at the same time behind the servant, for then she would have contrived that Mr. Godfrey should have lifted off Priscilla first, and, in the meantime, she would have persuaded her father to go round to the horse-block instead of alighting at the door-steps. It was very painful, when you had made it quite clear to a young man that you were determined not to marry him, however much he might wish

Thesaurus

attired: (*adj*) clad, appareled, clothed, garbed, habilimented, robed; (*adj, prep*) garmented.
bewitching: (*adj, v*) charming, fascinating, captivating, engaging; (*adj*) attractive, seductive, lovely, winning, entrancing, enthralling; (*v*) bewitch.
contour: (*n*) contour line, outline, form, profile, shape, line, configuration, silhouette, curve, circuit, edge. ANTONYM: (*n*) core.
costume: (*n*) clothing, clothes, apparel, garb, suit, outfit, uniform, garments, drapery; (*n, v*) dress; (*v*) clothe.
drab: (*adj*) dreary, gloomy, dingy, cheerless, somber, boring, dowdy, dark, colorless, dull, depressing. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) colorful, vivid, brilliant, chic, flashy, interesting, cheerful, distinctive, smart, strong.
exiguity: (*n*) insufficiency, scantiness, inadequacy, paucity, poorness, meagreness, scantness, poverty, lack, meagerness; (*adj*) inextension.
greatcoat: (*n*) coat, topcoat, capote, chesterfield, surcoat, Ulster.
open-eyed: (*adj*) watchful.
pillion: (*n*) saddle, pannel, seat.
sallow: (*adj*) pasty, pallid, bloodless, sickly, wan, ashen, fair, white, tawny, sandy; (*n*) osier. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) dark, glowing.
self-consciousness: (*n*) embarrassment, inhibition.
women: (*n*) sex, gentle sex.

it, that he would still continue to pay you marked attentions; besides, why didn't he always show the same attentions, if he meant them sincerely, instead of being so strange as Mr. Godfrey Cass was, sometimes behaving as if he didn't want to speak to her, and taking no notice of her for weeks and weeks, and then, all on a sudden, almost making love again? Moreover, it was quite plain he had no real love for her, else he would not let people have that to say of him which they did say. Did he suppose that Miss Nancy Lammeter was to be won by any man, **squire** or no squire, who led a bad life? That was not what she had been used to see in her own father, who was the soberest and best man in that country-side, only a little hot and hasty now and then, if things were not done to the minute.

All these thoughts rushed through Miss Nancy's mind, in their habitual succession, in the moments between her first sight of Mr. Godfrey Cass standing at the door and her own arrival there. Happily, the Squire came out too and gave a loud greeting to her father, so that, somehow, under cover of this noise she seemed to find **concealment** for her confusion and neglect of any suitably formal behaviour, while she was being lifted from the pillion by strong arms which seemed to find her **ridiculously** small and light. And there was the best reason for **hastening** into the house at once, since the snow was beginning to fall again, threatening an unpleasant journey for such guests as were still on the road. These were a small minority; for already the afternoon was beginning to decline, and there would not be too much time for the ladies who came from a distance to **attire** themselves in readiness for the early tea which was to **inspirit** them for the dance.

There was a buzz of voices through the house, as Miss Nancy entered, mingled with the scrape of a fiddle preluding in the kitchen; but the Lammeters were guests whose arrival had evidently been thought of so much that it had been watched for from the windows, for Mrs. Kimble, who did the **honours** at the Red House on these great occasions, came forward to meet Miss Nancy in the hall, and conduct her up-stairs. Mrs. Kimble was the Squire's sister, as well as the doctor's wife--a double dignity, with which her diameter was in direct proportion; so that, a journey up-stairs being rather **fatiguing** to her, she did not

Thesaurus

attire: (*n, v*) array, garb, apparel, wear; (*n*) costume, garment, outfit, clothes; (*v*) enrobe, clothe, dress up. ANTONYMS: (*v*) disrobe, bare, strip, unclothe; (*n*) nakedness.

concealment: (*n*) suppression, confidentiality, concealing, secrecy, screen, disguise, hiding, privacy, camouflage, blind, covering. ANTONYMS: (*n*) discovery, disclosure, exposure, expression, openness, uncovering, revelation.

fatiguing: (*adj*) arduous, tiresome, tedious, hard, laborious, wearisome, wearing, strenuous, exhausting, trying, onerous.

hastening: (*n*) quickening, speed, hurrying, speeding up, faster, fast, stepping up.

honours: (*n*) first, honors, degree, academic degree.

inspirit: (*adj, v*) encourage, enliven, exhilarate, embolden, gladden; (*v*) animate, inspire, hearten, comfort, spirit, incite.

ridiculously: (*adv*) absurdly, preposterously, idiotically, silly, stupidly, farcically, nonsensically, laughably, comically, derisorily, foolishly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) impressively, solemnly, sensitively, rationally.

squire: (*n, v*) escort; (*n*) landlord, gallant, attendant, beau, gentleman, esquire, landowner, landholder, armiger; (*v*) attend.

oppose Miss Nancy's request to be allowed to find her way alone to the Blue Room, where the Miss Lammeters' bandboxes had been deposited on their arrival in the morning.

There was hardly a bedroom in the house where feminine compliments were not passing and feminine toilettes going forward, in various stages, in space made scanty by extra beds spread upon the floor; and Miss Nancy, as she entered the Blue Room, had to make her little formal **curtsy** to a group of six. On the one hand, there were ladies no less important than the two Miss Gunns, the wine merchant's daughters from Lytherly, dressed in the height of fashion, with the tightest skirts and the shortest waists, and gazed at by Miss Ladbrook (of the Old Pastures) with a shyness not **unsustained** by inward criticism. Partly, Miss Ladbrook felt that her own skirt must be regarded as unduly lax by the Miss Gunns, and partly, that it was a pity the Miss Gunns did not show that judgment which she herself would show if she were in their place, by stopping a little on this side of the fashion. On the other hand, Mrs. Ladbrook was standing in skull-cap and front, with her **turban** in her hand, curtsying and smiling **blandly** and saying, "After you, ma'am," to another lady in similar circumstances, who had politely offered the precedence at the looking-glass.

But Miss Nancy had no sooner made her curtsy than an elderly lady came forward, whose full white **muslin kerchief**, and mob-cap round her **curls** of smooth grey hair, were in daring contrast with the puffed yellow satins and top-knotted caps of her neighbours. She approached Miss Nancy with much **primness**, and said, with a slow, treble suavity--

"Niece, I hope I see you well in health." Miss Nancy kissed her aunt's cheek **dutifully**, and answered, with the same sort of amiable primness, "Quite well, I thank you, aunt; and I hope I see you the same."

"Thank you, niece; I keep my health for the present. And how is my brother-in-law?"

These dutiful questions and answers were continued until it was ascertained in detail that the Lammeters were all as well as usual, and the Osgoods likewise, also that niece Priscilla must certainly arrive shortly, and that travelling on

Thesaurus

blandly: (*adv*) dully, insipidly, mildly, suavely, flatly, uninterestingly, tamely, weakly, boringly, flavorlessly, oily. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) meaningfully, interestingly, admirably.
curls: (*n*) hair, tresses, ringlets.
curtsy: (*n, v*) bob, curtsey; (*adj, n, v*) courtesy, kowtow; (*v*) nod, kneel, bow submission, recognize; (*n*) obeisance; (*adj*) salaam, kotow.
dutiful: (*adj*) duteous, good, faithful, docile, devoted, deferential, compliant, loyal, pious, meek, constant. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) unfaithful, undutiful, disrespectful, irresponsible, negligent, assertive, impious, irreverent, neglectful, thoughtful, uncaring.
kerchief: (*n*) napkin, neckerchief, hood, snood, headscarf, muffler, scarf, shawl, coif, babushka, Kercher.
muslin: (*v*) linen, cloth; (*n*) mousseline, organdy, cambric, crash, fabric, nainsook, organdie.
primness: (*n*) priggishness, Grundyism, propriety, properness, correctitude, prudery, prudishness, reserve, modesty.
turban: (*n*) peruke, pelt, periwig, pillbox, toque, front, caftan, chignon, turbant, headgear, millinery.
unsustained: (*v*) weak, spiritless, soft, frail, foolish, pliant, not stiff, not sonorous, not potent, debilitated; (*adj*) short.

pillions in snowy weather was unpleasant, though a joseph was a great protection. Then Nancy was formally introduced to her aunt's visitors, the Miss Gunns, as being the daughters of a mother known to *their* mother, though now for the first time induced to make a journey into these parts; and these ladies were so taken by surprise at finding such a lovely face and figure in an **out**-of-the-way country place, that they began to feel some curiosity about the dress she would put on when she took off her joseph. Miss Nancy, whose thoughts were always conducted with the propriety and moderation conspicuous in her manners, remarked to herself that the Miss Gunns were rather **hard**-featured than otherwise, and that such very low dresses as they wore might have been attributed to vanity if their shoulders had been pretty, but that, being as they were, it was not reasonable to suppose that they showed their necks from a love of display, but rather from some obligation not inconsistent with sense and modesty. She felt convinced, as she opened her box, that this must be her aunt Osgood's opinion, for Miss Nancy's mind resembled her aunt's to a degree that everybody said was surprising, considering the kinship was on Mr. Osgood's side; and though you might not have supposed it from the formality of their greeting, there was a devoted attachment and mutual admiration between aunt and niece. Even Miss Nancy's refusal of her cousin Gilbert Osgood (on the ground solely that he was her cousin), though it had **grieved** her aunt greatly, had not in the least **cooled** the preference which had determined her to leave Nancy several of her hereditary ornaments, let Gilbert's future wife be whom she might.

Three of the ladies quickly retired, but the Miss Gunns were quite content that Mrs. Osgood's inclination to remain with her niece gave them also a reason for staying to see the rustic beauty's **toilette**. And it was really a pleasure--from the first opening of the **bandbox**, where everything **smelt** of lavender and rose-leaves, to the clasping of the small coral **necklace** that fitted closely round her little white neck. Everything belonging to Miss Nancy was of delicate purity and **nattiness**: not a **crease** was where it had no business to be, not a bit of her linen **professed whiteness** without fulfilling its profession; the very pins on her **pincushion** were stuck in after a pattern from which she was careful to allow no

Thesaurus

bandbox: (*adj*) dapper, spruce.
cooled: (*adj*) refrigerated, frozen; (*n*) cooler.
crease: (*n, v*) fold, crinkle, plait, pucker, furrow, line; (*v*) crumple, cockle, rumple, ruck; (*n*) pleat. ANTONYMS: (*v*) iron, flatten.
grieved: (*adj*) sore, sad, sorry, sorrowful, upset, woeful, pained, affected, brokenhearted.
hard-featured: (*adj*) ugly.
nattiness: (*n*) jauntiness, chic, smartness, rakishness, modishness, chicness, breeziness.
necklace: (*n*) collar, chain, chaplet, bracelet, necklet, string, corona, neckband, jewelry, coronet, crown.
out-of-the-way: (*adj*) strange, singular, remote, devious, secluded, outlying, distant, obscure, unusual, peculiar, far.
pincushion: (*n*) bobbin.
professed: (*adj*) alleged, declared, apparent, avowed, pretended, seeming, supposed, affected, feigned, so-called, purported.
smelt: (*v*) fuse, temper, anneal, to smelt, distill, refine, heat; (*n*) sparling, capelan, caplin, capelin.
toilette: (*n*) dress, costume, attire, raiment, drapery, guise, trim, John, lavatory, privy, bathroom.
whiteness: (*n*) paleness, ivory, chalk, pearl, bone, bleach, alabaster, frostiness, hoariness, pallor, innocence. ANTONYM: (*n*) black.

aberration; and as for her own person, it gave the same idea of perfect **unvarying** neatness as the body of a little bird. It is true that her light-brown hair was **cropped** behind like a boy's, and was dressed in front in a number of flat rings, that lay quite away from her face; but there was no sort of **coiffure** that could make Miss Nancy's cheek and neck look otherwise than pretty; and when at last she stood complete in her silvery **twilled** silk, her lace tucker, her coral necklace, and coral ear-drops, the Miss Gunns could see nothing to criticise except her hands, which bore the traces of butter-making, cheese-crushing, and even still coarser work. But Miss Nancy was not ashamed of that, for even while she was dressing she **narrated** to her aunt how she and Priscilla had packed their boxes yesterday, because this morning was baking morning, and since they were leaving home, it was desirable to make a good supply of meat-pies for the kitchen; and as she concluded this judicious remark, she turned to the Miss Gunns that she might not commit the rudeness of not including them in the conversation. The Miss Gunns smiled stiffly, and thought what a pity it was that these rich country people, who could afford to buy such good clothes (really Miss Nancy's lace and silk were very costly), should be brought up in utter ignorance and vulgarity. She actually said "mate" for "meat", "'appen" for "perhaps", and "oss" for "horse", which, to young ladies living in good Lytherly society, who habitually said 'orse, even in domestic privacy, and only said 'appen on the right occasions, was necessarily shocking. Miss Nancy, indeed, had never been to any school higher than Dame Tedman's: her acquaintance with profane literature hardly went beyond the rhymes she had worked in her large sampler under the lamb and the **shepherdess**; and in order to balance an account, she was obliged to effect her subtraction by **removing** visible metallic shillings and sixpences from a visible metallic total. There is hardly a servant-maid in these days who is not better informed than Miss Nancy; yet she had the essential **attributes** of a lady--high **veracity**, delicate honour in her dealings, deference to others, and refined personal habits,--and lest these should not suffice to convince grammatical fair ones that her feelings can at all resemble theirs, I will add that she was slightly proud and exacting, and as constant in her affection towards a **baseless** opinion as towards an **erring** lover.

Thesaurus

attributes: (*n*) nature, property.
baseless: (*adj*) groundless, unwarranted, ungrounded, gratuitous, idle, unsupported, unfair, wanton, invalid, flimsy, undue. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) founded, sound, substantial, justified, valid, proven.
coiffure: (*n*) hairdo, hairstyle, hair style, beehive, chignon, haircut; (*v*) coiffe, coif, arrange, groom; (*n, v*) trim.
cropped: (*adj*) close.
erring: (*adj*) devious, sinful, fallible, wrong, amiss, at fault, guilty, perverse, reprehensible; (*n*) transgression.
narrated: (*adj*) oral, narrative.
removing: (*adj*) departing.
shepherdess: (*n*) sheepman, sheepherder, herdess, herder, cowherd.
twilled: (*adj*) corded, twill, unsmooth, rough.
unvarying: (*adj*) unchanging, invariable, constant, steady, uniform, invariant, changeless, consistent, unvaried, unchanged, equal. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) irregular, multiform, varied, dynamic, erratic, unequal.
veracity: (*n*) truth, accuracy, exactness, truthfulness, fact, reality, precision; (*adj, n*) probity; (*adj, n*) faithfulness, sincerity, candor. ANTONYMS: (*n*) mendacity, falsehood, falsity, dishonesty.

The anxiety about sister Priscilla, which had grown rather active by the time the **coral** necklace was clasped, was happily ended by the entrance of that cheerful-looking lady herself, with a face made **blowsy** by cold and damp. After the first questions and **greetings**, she turned to Nancy, and surveyed her from head to foot--then **wheeled** her round, to ascertain that the back view was equally faultless.

"What do you think o' *these* gowns, aunt Osgood?" said Priscilla, while Nancy helped her to **unrobe**.

"Very handsome indeed, **niece**," said Mrs. Osgood, with a slight increase of **formality**. She always thought niece Priscilla too rough.

"I'm obliged to have the same as Nancy, you know, for all I'm five years older, and it makes me look yallow; for she never *will* have anything without I have mine just like it, because she wants us to look like **sisters**. And I tell her, folks 'ull think it's my weakness makes me fancy as I shall look pretty in what she looks pretty in. For I *am* ugly--there's no denying that: I feature my father's family. But, law! I don't mind, do you?" Priscilla here turned to the Miss Gunns, rattling on in too much preoccupation with the delight of talking, to notice that her candour was not appreciated. "The pretty uns do for fly-catchers--they keep the men off us. I've no opinion o' the men, Miss Gunn--I don't know what *you* have. And as for **fretting** and **stewing** about what *they*'ll think of you from morning till night, and making your life uneasy about what they're doing when they're out o' your sight--as I tell Nancy, it's a folly no woman need be guilty of, if she's got a good father and a good home: let her leave it to them as have got no fortin, and can't help themselves. As I say, Mr. Have-your-own-way is the best husband, and the only one I'd ever promise to obey. I know it isn't pleasant, when you've been used to living in a big way, and managing hogsheads and all that, to go and put your nose in by somebody else's **fireside**, or to sit down by yourself to a **scrag** or a **knuckle**; but, thank God! my father's a sober man and likely to live; and if you've got a man by the chimney-corner, it doesn't matter if he's childish--the business needn't be broke up."

Thesaurus

blowsy: (*adj*) slatternly, untidy, sluttish, dowdy, ruddy.
coral: (*adj*) rosy, chromatic; (*n*) roe, red coral, red, precious coral, madrepore, anthozoan, actinozoan, orange.
fireside: (*n*) fireplace, home, family, habitation, dwelling, abode, domicile, country, dwelling house, fire, habitat.
formality: (*n*) ceremony, formalities, decorum, etiquette, custom, ceremoniousness, starch, ritual, rite, observance; (*n, v*) stiffness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) casualness, possibility, warmth, friendliness.
fretting: (*adj*) irritable, dissatisfied, peevish; (*n*) festering, friction, exulceration.
greetings: (*n*) greeting, respects, compliments, consolation, regards, commend, good wishes, commendation, induction, draft.
knuckle: (*n*) articulation, knee, elbow, fist, ankle, sickle, zigzag, scythe; (*v*) submit, succumb, surrender.
niece: (*n*) grandniece, aunt, brother's daughter, uncle, kinswoman.
scrag: (*v*) garrotte, garotte, strangulate, hang, strangle, fret; (*n*) throat, scrag end; (*adj*) snick, snatch, snack.
sisters: (*n*) sistren.
stewing: (*n*) simmering, boiling, agitation, cooking, cookery; (*adj*) sweltering.
unrobe: (*v*) disrobe, disattire, disarray.
wheeled: (*adj*) on wheels. ANTONYM: (*adj*) wheelless.

The delicate process of getting her narrow **gown** over her head without injury to her smooth curls, **obliged** Miss Priscilla to pause in this rapid survey of life, and Mrs. Osgood seized the opportunity of rising and saying--

"Well, niece, you'll follow us. The Miss Gunns will like to go down."

"Sister," said Nancy, when they were alone, "you've offended the Miss Gunns, I'm sure."

"What have I done, child?" said Priscilla, in some alarm.

"Why, you asked them if they **minded** about being ugly--you're so very blunt."

"Law, did I? Well, it popped out: it's a mercy I said no more, for I'm a bad un to live with folks when they don't like the truth. But as for being ugly, look at me, child, in this silver-coloured silk-- I told you how it 'ud be--I look as yallow as a daffadil. Anybody 'ud say you wanted to make a mawkin of me."

"No, Priscy, don't say so. I begged and prayed of you not to let us have this silk if you'd like another better. I was willing to have *your* choice, you know I was," said Nancy, in anxious self-vindication.

"Nonsense, child! you know you'd set your heart on this; and reason good, for you're the colour o' cream. It 'ud be fine doings for you to dress yourself to suit *my* skin. What I find fault with, is that notion o' yours as I must dress myself just like you. But you do as you like with me--you always did, from when first you begun to walk. If you wanted to go the field's length, the field's length you'd go; and there was no **whipping** you, for you looked as **prim** and innicent as a **daisy** all the while."

"Priscy," said Nancy, gently, as she **fastened** a coral necklace, exactly like her own, round Priscilla's neck, which was very far from being like her own, "I'm sure I'm willing to give way as far as is right, but who shouldn't dress alike if it isn't sisters? Would you have us go about looking as if we were no kin to one another--us that have got no mother and not another sister in the world? I'd do what was right, if I dressed in a gown **dyed** with cheese-colouring; and I'd rather you'd choose, and let me wear what pleases you."

Thesaurus

daisy: (*n*) marguerite, Bellis, aster family, Asteraceae, compositae, family Compositae, freckle, genus Bellis, grave, family Asteraceae; (*adj*) admirable.

dyed: (*adj*) colored, tinted, coloured, bleached, stained, painted, artificially coloured, biased, artificial, unreal, colorful.

fastened: (*adj*) tied, fast, buttoned, closed, tight, secure, pinned, binding, empight, steady, firm. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) unfastened, unbuttoned.

gown: (*n*) robe, clothing, cassock, vestment, wrapper, overclothes, outerwear, uniform, tunic, clothes; (*v*) clothe.

minded: (*prep*) inclined; (*adj, prep*) disposed; (*adj*) willing, apt, ready, prone, orientated, favorable, oriented, prepared, partial.

obliged: (*adj*) grateful, thankful, appreciative, forced, accountable, compelled; (*adj, v*) bound, under obligation; (*adj, prep*) indebted; (*v*) oblige, binding. ANTONYM: (*adj*) ungrateful.

prim: (*adj*) stiff, prudish, precise, priggish, neat, ceremonious, mincing, squeamish, prissy, decorous, demure. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) relaxed, brash, uninhibited, informal, improper, lax.

whipping: (*n*) flagellation, beating, thrashing, licking, lashing, flogging, overcasting, debacle, slaughter, overlocking; (*adj*) snappy.

"There you go again! You'd come round to the same thing if one talked to you from Saturday night till Saturday morning. It'll be fine fun to see how you'll master your husband and never raise your voice above the singing o' the kettle all the while. I like to see the men mastered!"

"Don't talk *so*, Priscy," said Nancy, **blushing**. "You know I don't mean ever to be married."

"Oh, you never mean a fiddlestick's end!" said Priscilla, as she arranged her discarded dress, and closed her bandbox. "Who shall *I* have to work for when father's gone, if you are to go and take notions in your head and be an old maid, because some folks are no better than they should be? I haven't a bit o' patience with you-- sitting on an **addled** egg for ever, as if there was never a fresh un in the world. One old maid's enough out o' two sisters; and I shall do credit to a single life, for God A'mighty meant me for it. Come, we can go down now. I'm as ready as a mawkin *can* be--there's nothing awanting to frighten the crows, now I've got my ear-droppers in."

As the two Miss Lammeters walked into the large **parlour** together, any one who did not know the character of both might certainly have supposed that the reason why the square-shouldered, clumsy, high-featured Priscilla wore a dress the facsimile of her pretty sister's, was either the mistaken vanity of the one, or the malicious **contrivance** of the other in order to set off her own rare beauty. But the good-natured self-forgetful **cheeriness** and common-sense of Priscilla would soon have dissipated the one suspicion; and the modest calm of Nancy's speech and manners told clearly of a mind free from all disavowed devices.

Places of honour had been kept for the Miss Lammeters near the head of the principal tea-table in the wainscoted parlour, now looking fresh and pleasant with handsome branches of holly, yew, and **laurel**, from the abundant growths of the old garden; and Nancy felt an inward **flutter**, that no **firmness** of purpose could prevent, when she saw Mr. Godfrey Cass advancing to lead her to a seat between himself and Mr. Crackenthorp, while Priscilla was called to the opposite side between her father and the Squire. It certainly did make some difference to Nancy that the lover she had given up was the young man of quite the highest

Thesaurus

addled: (*adj*) muddled, bewildered, acarpous, unfruitful, arid, infecund, unfertile, unprolific, sterile, stale, tainted.

blushing: (*adj*) rosy, coy, blushful, flushed, red, shy, bashful, overmodest, ruddy; (*adv*) blushingly, ablush. ANTONYM: (*adj*) pale.

cheeriness: (*n*) happiness, optimism, joyfulness, joy, buoyancy, jollity, jolliness, fun, good cheer, geniality, cheer. ANTONYMS: (*n*) sulkiness, gloominess, misery.

contrivance: (*n*) device, appliance, gadget, artifice, plot, dodge, resource, plan, contraption, machine, apparatus.

firmness: (*adj, n*) constancy; (*n*) determination, resolution, assurance, consistency, obstinacy, steadfastness, resolve, confidence, courage, backbone. ANTONYMS: (*n*) softness, instability, vacillation, unsteadiness, yielding, irresoluteness, droopiness, indefiniteness, indecisiveness, indecision, leniency.

flutter: (*adj, n, v*) bustle, flurry; (*n, v*) beat, palpitate, flap, wave, waver, quiver; (*v*) flit, flitter; (*n*) excitement.

laurel: (*n*) bays, honor, rose-laurel, cassia, cinnamon, sweet bay, Daphne, bay tree, palm, garland, fame.

parlour: (*n*) living room, parlor, sitting room, front room, livingroom, room to meet guests, parlours, parlors, salon, reception room, room.

consequence in the parish--at home in a venerable and unique parlour, which was the extremity of grandeur in her experience, a parlour where *she* might one day have been mistress, with the consciousness that she was spoken of as "Madam Cass", the Squire's wife. These circumstances **exalted** her inward drama in her own eyes, and deepened the emphasis with which she declared to herself that not the most dazzling rank should induce her to marry a man whose conduct showed him careless of his character, but that, "love once, love always", was the motto of a true and pure woman, and no man should ever have any right over her which would be a call on her to destroy the dried **flowers** that she **treasured**, and always would treasure, for Godfrey Cass's sake. And Nancy was capable of keeping her word to herself under very trying conditions. Nothing but a becoming blush betrayed the moving thoughts that urged themselves upon her as she accepted the seat next to Mr. Crackenthorp; for she was so instinctively neat and **adroit** in all her actions, and her pretty lips met each other with such quiet firmness, that it would have been difficult for her to appear agitated.

It was not the rector's practice to let a charming blush pass without an appropriate compliment. He was not in the least lofty or aristocratic, but simply a merry-eyed, small-featured, grey-haired man, with his chin propped by an ample, many-creased white **neckcloth** which seemed to **predominate** over every other point in his person, and somehow to impress its peculiar character on his remarks; so that to have considered his amenities apart from his **cravat** would have been a severe, and perhaps a dangerous, effort of abstraction.

"Ha, Miss Nancy," he said, turning his head within his cravat and smiling down pleasantly upon her, "when anybody pretends this has been a severe winter, I shall tell them I saw the roses blooming on New Year's Eve--eh, Godfrey, what do *you* say?"

Godfrey made no reply, and avoided looking at Nancy very markedly; for though these complimentary personalities were held to be in excellent taste in old-fashioned Raveloe society, **reverent** love has a politeness of its own which it teaches to men otherwise of small schooling. But the Squire was rather impatient

Thesaurus

adroit: (*adj*) dexterous, ingenious, slick, intelligent, expert, artful, able, clever, adept, politic, sharp. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) awkward, maladroit, dim, inept, bumbling, stupid, unskilled, dense, fumbling, naive, incompetent.
cravat: (*n*) neckerchief, neckcloth, stock, ascot, collar, handkerchief, scarf, neckwear, necktie, ruff.
exalted: (*adj*) elevated, eminent, noble, high, August, elated, dignified, great, sublime, grand, big. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) belittled, condemned, criticized, debased, humble, humiliated, low, lowly, minor, ridiculed, base.
flowers: (*n*) analecta, anthology.
neckcloth: (*n*) neckerchief, scarf, handkerchief, gunstock, broth, caudex, descent, farm animal, breed, gillyflower, inventory.
predominate: (*v*) command, outweigh, govern, reign, overrule, rule; (*adj, v*) prevail, master; (*adj*) predominant, preponderate, paramount.
reverent: (*adj, v*) pious, devout, religious; (*adj*) respectful, holy, deferential, godly, reverential, worshipful, pietistic; (*v*) devotional. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) blasphemous, disrespectful, impious, irreverent.
treasured: (*adj*) precious, prized, dear, beloved, loved, valued, appreciated, favorite, etched in your mind, esteemed, invited. ANTONYM: (*adj*) unremarkable.

at Godfrey's showing himself a dull spark in this way. By this advanced hour of the day, the Squire was always in higher spirits than we have seen him in at the breakfast-table, and felt it quite pleasant to fulfil the hereditary duty of being noisily **jovial** and **patronizing**: the large silver snuff-box was in active service and was offered without fail to all neighbours from time to time, however often they might have declined the favour. At present, the Squire had only given an express welcome to the heads of families as they appeared; but always as the evening deepened, his hospitality rayed out more widely, till he had tapped the youngest **guests** on the back and shown a peculiar **fondness** for their presence, in the full belief that they must feel their lives made happy by their belonging to a parish where there was such a **hearty** man as Squire Cass to invite them and wish them well. Even in this early stage of the jovial mood, it was natural that he should wish to supply his son's deficiencies by looking and speaking for him.

"Aye, aye," he began, offering his snuff-box to Mr. Lammeter, who for the second time bowed his head and waved his hand in stiff rejection of the offer, "us old fellows may wish ourselves young to-night, when we see the mistletoe-bough in the White Parlour. It's true, most things are gone back'ard in these last thirty years-- the country's going down since the old king fell ill. But when I look at Miss Nancy here, I begin to think the lasses keep up their quality;--ding me if I remember a sample to match her, not when I was a fine young fellow, and thought a deal about my **pigtail**. No offence to you, madam," he added, bending to Mrs. Crackenthorp, who sat by him, "I didn't know *you* when you were as young as Miss Nancy here."

Mrs. Crackenthorp--a small blinking woman, who fidgeted **incessantly** with her lace, ribbons, and gold chain, turning her head about and making subdued noises, very much like a guinea-pig that twitches its nose and soliloquizes in all company indiscriminately-- now blinked and fidgeted towards the Squire, and said, "Oh, no--no offence."

This emphatic compliment of the Squire's to Nancy was felt by others besides Godfrey to have a diplomatic significance; and her father gave a slight additional **erectness** to his back, as he looked across the table at her with complacent

Thesaurus

erectness: (*n*) stance, verticalness, uprightness, verticality.
fondness: (*n*) affection, attachment, love, taste, regard, appetite, tenderness, partiality, endearment, liking, relish. ANTONYMS: (*n*) aversion, indifference, neglect, antipathy, detachment, hatred.
guests: (*n*) guest, visitors.
hearty: (*adj*) heartfelt, healthy, genial, sturdy, cheering, fervent, wholehearted, lusty, enthusiastic, convivial; (*adj, n*) well. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) unhealthy, frail, old, weak, sluggish, unwholesome, meager.
incessantly: (*adv*) constantly, endlessly, continually, perpetually, continuously, unceasingly, eternally, persistently, unremittingly, unendingly, steadily. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) sporadically, briefly.
jovial: (*adj, n*) gay; (*adj*) jolly, genial, glad, festive, joyful, gleeful, merry, jocund, cheerful, blithe. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) miserable, gloomy, frosty, serious, hostile.
patronizing: (*adj*) condescending, haughty, patronising, superior, arrogant, snobbish, arch, supercilious; (*v*) patronize; (*n*) patronage; (*adv*) patronizingly. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) humble, deferential, modest.
pigtail: (*v*) braid, tail, flap, skirt, train; (*n*) ponytail, tress, coil, pendulum, thin spun tobacco.

gravity. That grave and orderly senior was not going to **bate** a jot of his dignity by seeming elated at the notion of a match between his family and the Squire's: he was **gratified** by any honour paid to his daughter; but he must see an alteration in several ways before his consent would be vouchsafed. His spare but healthy person, and high-featured firm face, that looked as if it had never been flushed by excess, was in strong contrast, not only with the Squire's, but with the appearance of the Raveloe farmers generally--in accordance with a favourite saying of his own, that "breed was stronger than pasture".

"Miss Nancy's wonderful like what her mother was, though; isn't she, Kimble?" said the stout lady of that name, looking round for her husband.

But Doctor Kimble (country apothecaries in old days enjoyed that title without authority of diploma), being a thin and **agile** man, was **flitting** about the room with his hands in his pockets, making himself agreeable to his feminine patients, with medical **impartiality**, and being welcomed everywhere as a doctor by **hereditary** right--not one of those miserable apothecaries who **canvass** for practice in strange **neighbourhoods**, and spend all their income in starving their one horse, but a man of substance, able to keep an extravagant table like the best of his patients. Time out of mind the Raveloe doctor had been a Kimble; Kimble was inherently a doctor's name; and it was difficult to contemplate firmly the melancholy fact that the actual Kimble had no son, so that his practice might one day be handed over to a successor with the incongruous name of Taylor or Johnson. But in that case the wiser people in Raveloe would employ Dr. Blick of Flitton--as less unnatural.

"Did you speak to me, my dear?" said the authentic doctor, coming quickly to his wife's side; but, as if **foreseeing** that she would be too much out of breath to repeat her remark, he went on immediately-- "Ha, Miss Priscilla, the sight of you revives the taste of that super-excellent pork-pie. I hope the batch isn't near an end."

"Yes, indeed, it is, doctor," said Priscilla; "but I'll answer for it the next shall be as good. My pork-pies don't turn out well by chance."

Thesaurus

agile: (*adj*) active, nimble, spry, quick, adroit, deft, lively, dapper, supple, lithe, astute. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) stiff, ponderous, brittle, logical, oafish, slow, sluggish, unfit, awkward, heavy, inflexible.

bate: (*v*) abate, curtail, discount, deduct, dequantitate, douse, contain, drench, detract; (*n*) battue, bath.

canvass: (*n, v*) campaign, discuss; (*n*) review; (*v*) beg, examine, scrutinize, view, agitate, inspect, survey, study. ANTONYM: (*v*) neglect.

flitting: (*adj*) fleeting, fugitive, momentary, transient, ephemeral; (*v*) migration.

foreseeing: (*n*) foresight, anticipation, prospicience, prevision, forecast; (*v*) foresee; (*adj*) prevoyant, conscious beforehand.

gratified: (*adj*) glad, satisfied, pleased, delighted, happy, thankful, grateful, content, complacent, comfortable, cheerful.

hereditary: (*adj*) familial, ancestral, inherent, heritable, inherited, inborn, congenital, innate, patrimonial, native, heredity.

impartiality: (*adj, n*) justice, honesty; (*n*) fairness, disinterestedness, candor, equality, indifference, detachment, evenhandedness; (*adj*) impartial, fair play. ANTONYMS: (*n*) injustice, bias, inequality, partiality, prejudice, subjectivity.

neighbourhoods: (*n*) neighbourhood.

"Not as your **doctoring** does, eh, Kimble?--because folks forget to take your physic, eh?" said the Squire, who regarded physic and doctors as many loyal churchmen regard the church and the clergy-- **tasting** a joke against them when he was in health, but impatiently eager for their aid when anything was the matter with him. He tapped his box, and looked round with a triumphant laugh.

"Ah, she has a quick wit, my friend Priscilla has," said the doctor, choosing to attribute the **epigram** to a lady rather than allow a brother-in-law that advantage over him. "She saves a little pepper to sprinkle over her talk--that's the reason why she never puts too much into her pies. There's my wife now, she never has an answer at her tongue's end; but if I offend her, she's sure to **scarify** my throat with black pepper the next day, or else give me the **colic** with watery greens. That's an awful tit-for-tat." Here the **vivacious** doctor made a pathetic **grimace**.

"Did you ever hear the like?" said Mrs. Kimble, laughing above her double chin with much good-humour, aside to Mrs. Crackenthorp, who blinked and nodded, and seemed to intend a smile, which, by the correlation of forces, went off in small twitchings and noises.

"I suppose that's the sort of tit-for-tat adopted in your profession, Kimble, if you've a grudge against a patient," said the rector.

"Never do have a grudge against our patients," said Mr. Kimble, "except when they leave us: and then, you see, we haven't the chance of prescribing for 'em. Ha, Miss Nancy," he continued, suddenly **skipping** to Nancy's side, "you won't forget your promise? You're to save a dance for me, you know."

"Come, come, Kimble, don't you be too for'ard," said the Squire. "Give the young uns fair-play. There's my son Godfrey'll be wanting to have a round with you if you run off with Miss Nancy. He's **bespoke** her for the first dance, I'll be bound. Eh, sir! what do you say?" he continued, throwing himself backward, and looking at Godfrey. "Haven't you asked Miss Nancy to open the dance with you?"

Thesaurus

bespoke: (*adj*) bespoken, custom, engaged, affianced, commissioned, customized, made to measure, made to order, modified, personalized, specially made.
colic: (*n*) Uterine colic , gripe, hurting, mulligrubs, pain, stomach pain, tummy ache, newborn colic, enteralgia, intestinal colic, tummy pain.
doctoring: (*n*) doping, corruption.
epigram: (*n*) aphorism, joke, witticism, expression, locution, saying, crack, wisecrack, moral, jeu d'esprit, smart saying.
grimace: (*n, v*) scowl, glower, sneer, smile, roar; (*n*) face, mop, mouth, expression; (*v*) pull a face, wince.
scarify: (*v*) scar, indent, dent, jag, nick, notch, rack, score, scollop, Vandyke, scotch.
skipping: (*n*) jumping, leaping, absenteeism; (*adv*) skippingly, leapingly.
tasting: (*n*) degustation, gustation, savoring, relishing, sample, gustatory sensation, gustatory perception, discernment, drinking, eating, feeding.
vivacious: (*adj*) lively, animated, sprightly, vibrant, spry, effervescent, gay; (*adj, v*) cheerful, active, buoyant, brisk. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) dull, lethargic, listless, compliment, inactive, praise, languid, lifeless, serious, sluggish.

Godfrey, **sorely** uncomfortable under this significant insistence about Nancy, and afraid to think where it would end by the time his father had set his usual **hospitable** example of drinking before and after supper, saw no course open but to turn to Nancy and say, with as little **awkwardness** as possible--

"No; I've not asked her yet, but I hope she'll consent--if somebody else hasn't been before me."

"No, I've not engaged myself," said Nancy, quietly, though **blushingly**. (If Mr. Godfrey founded any hopes on her **consenting** to dance with him, he would soon be **undeceived**; but there was no need for her to be uncivil.)

"Then I hope you've no objections to dancing with me," said Godfrey, beginning to lose the sense that there was anything uncomfortable in this arrangement.

"No, no objections," said Nancy, in a cold tone.

"Ah, well, you're a lucky fellow, Godfrey," said uncle Kimble; "but you're my godson, so I won't stand in your way. Else I'm not so very old, eh, my dear?" he went on, skipping to his wife's side again. "You wouldn't mind my having a second after you were gone-- not if I cried a good deal first?"

"Come, come, take a cup o' tea and stop your tongue, do," said good-humoured Mrs. Kimble, feeling some pride in a husband who must be regarded as so clever and amusing by the company generally. If he had only not been irritable at cards!

While safe, well-tested personalities were **enlivening** the tea in this way, the sound of the **fiddle** approaching within a distance at which it could be heard distinctly, made the young people look at each other with sympathetic impatience for the end of the meal.

"Why, there's Solomon in the hall," said the Squire, "and playing my fav'rite tune, *I* believe--"The flaxen-headed ploughboy"-- he's for giving us a hint as we aren't enough in a hurry to hear him play. Bob," he called out to his third long-legged son, who was at the other end of the room, "open the door, and tell Solomon to come in. He shall give us a tune here."

Thesaurus

awkwardness: (*n*) embarrassment, stiffness, unwieldiness, inconvenience, gawkiness, inelegance, troublesomeness, ineptitude, ineptness, gaucherie; (*adj, n*) delicacy. ANTONYMS: (*n*) gracefulness, grace, comfort, coordination, pride, urbanity, ease, assurance, liveliness, confidence, cooperation.

blushingly: (*adv*) blush, ruddily, rosily, blushfully, redly, shily, overmodestly.

consenting: (*adj*) agreeable, yielding, submissive, consentant, compliant, affirmative, accepting; (*v*) complying, chosen.

enlivening: (*adj*) cheerful, bracing, genial, refreshing, invigorating, thrilling, revitalizing, reviving, stimulating, pleasant, vitalizing.

fiddle: (*n, v*) con, cheat, trick; (*v*) tamper, play, diddle, meddle, tinker; (*n*) kit, swindle, fraud.

hospitable: (*adj*) affable, receptive, gracious, cordial, generous, amiable, convivial, genial, pleasant, warm, to enjoy having guests. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) unwelcoming, inhospitable, sinister, hostile.

sorely: (*adv*) severely, tenderly, madly, very, greatly, highly, most, distressingly, extremely, hard, sensitively.

undeceived: (*adj*) disillusioned, disenchanted.

Bob obeyed, and Solomon walked in, **fiddling** as he walked, for he would on no account break off in the middle of a tune.

"Here, Solomon," said the Squire, with loud patronage. "Round here, my man. Ah, I knew it was "The flaxen-headed ploughboy": there's no **finer** tune."

Solomon Macey, a small **hale** old man with an abundant crop of long white hair reaching nearly to his shoulders, advanced to the indicated spot, **bowing reverently** while he fiddled, as much as to say that he respected the company, though he respected the key-note more. As soon as he had repeated the tune and lowered his fiddle, he bowed again to the Squire and the rector, and said, "I hope I see your honour and your reverence well, and wishing you health and long life and a happy New Year. And wishing the same to you, Mr. Lammeter, sir; and to the other gentlemen, and the madams, and the young lasses."

As Solomon **uttered** the last words, he bowed in all directions **solicitously**, lest he should be wanting in due respect. But **thereupon** he immediately began to prelude, and fell into the tune which he knew would be taken as a special compliment by Mr. Lammeter.

"Thank ye, Solomon, thank ye," said Mr. Lammeter when the fiddle paused again. "That's "Over the hills and far away", that is. My father used to say to me, whenever we heard that tune, "Ah, lad, *I* come from over the hills and far away." There's a many tunes I don't make head or tail of; but that **speaks** to me like the blackbird's whistle. I suppose it's the name: there's a deal in the name of a tune."

But Solomon was already impatient to prelude again, and presently broke with much spirit into "Sir Roger de Coverley", at which there was a sound of chairs pushed back, and laughing voices.

"Aye, aye, Solomon, we know what that means," said the Squire, rising. "It's time to begin the dance, eh? Lead the way, then, and we'll all follow you."

So Solomon, holding his white head on one side, and playing vigorously, marched forward at the head of the gay procession into the White Parlour, where the mistletoe-bough was hung, and multitudinous **tallow** candles made rather a

Thesaurus

bowing: (*n*) obeisance, playing, gesticulation, capitulation, genuflection, scraping, submission; (*adj*) bowed, bent, fawning, submissive.
fiddling: (*adj*) petty, piffling, niggling, picayune, little, footling, piddling, Lilliputian, diminutive, tiny, insignificant. ANTONYM: (*n*) correction.
finer: (*adj*) superior, advanced, bigger, higher, more, greater.
hale: (*adj*) healthy, whole, sturdy, strong, sane, rugged, robust; (*v*) drag; (*adj, n*) well, hearty, sound. ANTONYM: (*adj*) unwell.
reverently: (*adv*) reverentially, piously, religiously, devoutly, deferentially, worshipfully, solemnly, godly, courteously, politely, obsequiously. ANTONYM: (*adv*) irreverently.
solicitously: (*adv*) considerately, concernedly, carefully, uneasily, kindly, apprehensively, attentively, caringly, politely, jealously, earnestly.
speaks: (*n*) talks.
tallow: (*n*) grease, lard, oil, suet, cream, butter, cicatrix, beef tallow, dubbin, animal oil, scar.
thereupon: (*adv*) hereupon, next, then, immediately, therefore, therewith, in the sequel, close upon, upon which, whereupon, accordingly.
uttered: (*adj*) expressed, express, verbalised, verbalized, vocal, explicit, oral; (*v*) spoke, quoth, said.

brilliant effect, gleaming from among the **berried** holly-boughs, and reflected in the old-fashioned oval mirrors fastened in the panels of the white wainscot. A quaint procession! Old Solomon, in his seedy clothes and long white locks, seemed to be **luring** that decent company by the magic scream of his fiddle--luring discreet matrons in turban-shaped caps, nay, Mrs. Crackenthorp herself, the summit of whose perpendicular feather was on a level with the Squire's shoulder--luring fair lasses **complacently** conscious of very short waists and skirts blameless of front-folds--luring burly fathers in large variegated waistcoats, and ruddy sons, for the most part shy and **sheepish**, in short nether garments and very long coat-tails.

Already Mr. Macey and a few other privileged villagers, who were allowed to be spectators on these great occasions, were seated on **benches** placed for them near the door; and great was the admiration and satisfaction in that quarter when the couples had formed themselves for the dance, and the Squire led off with Mrs. Crackenthorp, joining hands with the rector and Mrs. Osgood. That was as it should be--that was what everybody had been used to-- and the charter of Raveloe seemed to be renewed by the ceremony. It was not thought of as an **unbecoming levity** for the old and middle-aged people to dance a little before sitting down to cards, but rather as part of their social duties. For what were these if not to be merry at appropriate times, interchanging visits and poultry with due frequency, paying each other old-established compliments in sound traditional phrases, passing well-tried personal jokes, urging your guests to eat and drink too much out of hospitality, and eating and drinking too much in your neighbour's house to show that you liked your cheer? And the parson naturally set an example in these social duties. For it would not have been possible for the Raveloe mind, without a peculiar revelation, to know that a clergyman should be a pale-faced memento of solemnities, instead of a reasonably faulty man whose exclusive authority to read prayers and preach, to **christen**, marry, and bury you, necessarily coexisted with the right to sell you the ground to be buried in and to take **tithe** in kind; on which last point, of course, there was a little grumbling, but not to the extent of irreligion--not of deeper significance than the grumbling at

Thesaurus

benches: (*n*) bleachers.
berried: (*adj*) bacciferous, baccate, fruitful.
christen: (*v*) entitle, baptize, dub, name, baptise, designate, style, term, specify, define, denominate.
complacently: (*adv*) contently, conceitedly, self-satisfiedly, graciously, arrogantly, satisfiedly, contentedly, virtuously, sanctimoniously.
levity: (*n*) flightiness, frivolity, flippancy, buoyancy, lightness, giddiness, inconstancy, frivolousness, humorousness, jocosity; (*n, v*) fickleness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) gravity, seriousness.
luring: (*adj*) attractive, fetching, persuasive.
sheepish: (*adj*) coy, diffident, shamefaced, bashful, shy, guilty, embarrassed, nervous, skittish, faint-hearted, pusillanimous. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) unabashed, proud.
tithe: (*adj, n*) tenth; (*n*) gavel, excise, custom, assessment, octroi, benevolence, tithing, disme; (*n, v*) tax; (*adj*) decimal.
unbecoming: (*adj*) indecorous, unseemly, inappropriate, indecent, indelicate, untoward, unworthy, unsuitable, shameful, unbefitting, incongruous. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) dignified, becoming, fitting, proper, seemly, correct, decent, suitable.

the rain, which was by no means accompanied with a spirit of impious defiance, but with a desire that the prayer for fine weather might be read forthwith.

There was no reason, then, why the rector's dancing should not be received as part of the fitness of things quite as much as the Squire's, or why, on the other hand, Mr. Macey's official respect should restrain him from subjecting the parson's performance to that criticism with which minds of extraordinary acuteness must necessarily contemplate the doings of their **fallible** fellow-men.

"The Squire's pretty **springe**, considering his weight," said Mr. Macey, "and he stamps uncommon well. But Mr. Lammeter **beats** 'em all for shapes: you see he holds his head like a sodger, and he isn't so **cushiony** as most o' the oldish gentlefolks--they run fat in general; and he's got a fine leg. The parson's **nimble** enough, but he hasn't got much of a leg: it's a bit too thick down'ard, and his knees might be a bit nearer wi'out damage; but he might do worse, he might do worse. Though he hasn't that grand way o' waving his hand as the Squire has."

"Talk o' **nimbleness**, look at Mrs. Osgood," said Ben Winthrop, who was holding his son Aaron between his knees. "She trips along with her little steps, so as nobody can see how she goes--it's like as if she had little wheels to her feet. She doesn't look a day older nor last year: she's the finest-made woman as is, let the next be where she will."

"I don't heed how the women are made," said Mr. Macey, with some contempt. "They wear nayther coat nor **breeches**: you can't make much out o' their shapes."

"Fayder," said Aaron, whose feet were busy beating out the tune, "how does that big cock's-feather stick in Mrs. Crackenthorp's yead? Is there a little hole for it, like in my shuttle-cock?"

"Hush, lad, hush; that's the way the ladies dress theirselves, that is," said the father, adding, however, in an **undertone** to Mr. Macey, "It does make her look funny, though--partly like a short-necked bottle wi' a long **quill** in it. Hey, by **jingo**, there's the young Squire leading off now, wi' Miss Nancy for partners! There's a lass for you!--like a pink-and-white posy--there's nobody 'ud think as

Thesaurus

beats: (*n*) beat, beatniks, Beat Generation.
breeches: (*n*) knickers, inexpressibles, knickerbockers, brogues, short, smalls, overalls, small clothes, pants, trousers, pantaloons.
cushiony: (*adj, v*) spongy; (*adj*) cushioned, padded; (*v*) doughy, foamy, penetrable.
fallible: (*adj*) fallacious, unreliable, human, weak, untrustworthy, erring, errant, imperfect; (*v*) ticklish, precarious, slippery. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) infallible, reliable, strong, sure, unerring.
jingo: (*n*) jingoist, patriot; (*adj*) fighting.
nimble: (*adj*) lively, adroit, agile, brisk, spry, alert, expeditious, energetic, clever, lithe; (*adj, v*) light. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) clumsy, heavy, stiff, slow, awkward, sluggish, unfit.
nimbleness: (*n*) lightness, dexterity, alertness, adroitness, legerity, deftness, quickness, lightsomeness, haste, legerdemain, grace. ANTONYMS: (*n*) clumsiness, heaviness, awkwardness.
quill: (*n, v*) pen; (*n*) feather, pinion, prick, calamus, thorn, shaft, quill feather, plumage, quill pen, spine.
springe: (*n*) springle.
undertone: (*n*) undercurrent, murmur, tinge, nuance, whisper, suggestion, implication, connotation, overtone, association, hint.

anybody could be so pritty. I shouldn't wonder if she's Madam Cass some day, arter all--and nobody more rightfuller, for they'd make a fine match. You can find nothing against Master Godfrey's shapes, Macey, *I*'ll bet a penny."

Mr. Macey **screwed** up his mouth, leaned his head further on one side, and twirled his thumbs with a **presto** movement as his eyes followed Godfrey up the dance. At last he summed up his opinion.

"Pretty well down'ard, but a bit too round i' the shoulder-blades. And as for them coats as he **gets** from the Flitton tailor, they're a poor cut to pay double money for."

"Ah, Mr. Macey, you and me are two folks," said Ben, slightly **indignant** at this **carping**. "When I've got a pot o' good ale, I like to swaller it, and do my inside good, i'stead o' **smelling** and staring at it to see if I can't find faut wi' the **brewing**. I should like you to pick me out a finer-limbed young fellow nor Master Godfrey--one as 'ud knock you down easier, or 's more pleasanter-looksed when he's piert and merry."

"Tchuh!" said Mr. Macey, provoked to increased severity, "he isn't come to his right colour yet: he's partly like a slack-baked pie. And I doubt he's got a soft place in his head, else why should he be turned round the finger by that **offal** Dunsey as nobody's seen o' late, and let him kill that fine hunting hoss as was the talk o' the country? And one while he was allays after Miss Nancy, and then it all went off again, like a smell o' hot **porridge**, as I may say. That wasn't my way when *I* went a-coorting."

"Ah, but mayhap Miss Nancy hung off, like, and your lass didn't," said Ben.

"I should say she didn't," said Mr. Macey, significantly. "Before I said "sniff", I took care to know as she'd say "snaff", and pretty quick too. I wasn't a-going to open *my* mouth, like a dog at a fly, and **snap** it to again, wi' nothing to swaller."

"Well, I think Miss Nancy's a-coming round again," said Ben, "for Master Godfrey doesn't look so down-hearted to-night. And I see he's for taking her away to sit down, now they're at the end o' the dance: that looks like sweethearting, that does."

Thesaurus

brewing: (*v*) preparing, forthcoming, culinary art, brooding; (*n*) production; (*adj*) impending, destined, imminent.
carping: (*adj, v*) captious, critical, censorious; (*adj*) hypercritical, picky, irritable, querulous; (*n*) faultfinding, criticism, cavil, censoriousness.
gets: (*n*) getting.
indignant: (*adj*) angry, incensed, furious, enraged, wrathful, hurt, rage, provoked, hot, anger, irate. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) cool, content, unaffected.
offal: (*n*) litter, waste, junk, leavings, trash, refuse, rubbish, dross, residue, organs, debris.
porridge: (*v*) oatmeal, hasty pudding, mince pie, oyster, pineapple, mango; (*n*) burgoo, pap, plash, loblolly, podge.
presto: (*adj, adv*) suddenly; (*adj*) subito, instanter; (*adv*) quickly, immediately, faster, like a shot, early.
screwed: (*adj*) threaded, firm, maudlin, muddled, muzzy, raddled, corned; (*n*) whittled.
smelling: (*n*) smell, flavor, scent, olfactory modality, sensing, sense of smell; (*adj*) redolent, scented, odorous, stinking, rotten.
snap: (*v*) bite, nip, snarl; (*adj, v*) break; (*n, v*) photograph, fracture, clack, go; (*n*) pushover, picnic, catch. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) roundabout, considered.

The reason why Godfrey and **Nancy** had left the dance was not so tender as Ben imagined. In the close press of couples a slight accident had happened to Nancy's dress, which, while it was short enough to show her neat ankle in front, was long enough behind to be caught under the stately stamp of the Squire's foot, so as to **rend** certain stitches at the waist, and cause much **sisterly** agitation in Priscilla's mind, as well as serious concern in Nancy's. One's thoughts may be much occupied with love-struggles, but hardly so as to be **insensible** to a disorder in the general framework of things. Nancy had no sooner completed her duty in the figure they were dancing than she said to Godfrey, with a deep **blush**, that she must go and sit down till Priscilla could come to her; for the sisters had already exchanged a short whisper and an open-eyed glance full of meaning. No reason less urgent than this could have prevailed on Nancy to give Godfrey this opportunity of sitting apart with her. As for Godfrey, he was feeling so happy and oblivious under the long charm of the country-dance with Nancy, that he got rather bold on the strength of her confusion, and was capable of leading her straight away, without leave asked, into the adjoining small parlour, where the card-tables were set.

"Oh no, thank you," said Nancy, coldly, as soon as she perceived where he was going, "not in there. I'll wait here till Priscilla's ready to come to me. I'm sorry to bring you out of the dance and make myself troublesome."

"Why, you'll be more comfortable here by yourself," said the **artful** Godfrey: "I'll leave you here till your sister can come." He spoke in an indifferent tone.

That was an agreeable proposition, and just what Nancy desired; why, then, was she a little hurt that Mr. Godfrey should make it? They entered, and she seated herself on a chair against one of the card-tables, as the stiffest and most **unapproachable** position she could choose.

"Thank you, sir," she said immediately. "I needn't give you any more trouble. I'm sorry you've had such an unlucky partner."

"That's very **ill**-natured of you," said Godfrey, standing by her without any sign of intended departure, "to be sorry you've danced with me."

Thesaurus

artful: (*adj*) crafty, cunning, scheming, wily, shrewd, insidious, designing, sly, adroit, subtle, disingenuous. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) artless, unskillful, inept, ingenuous, unskilled, open, straight.

blush: (*n, v*) glow, color; (*v*) redden, crimson; (*n*) red, bloom, rosiness, ruddiness, redness; (*adj*) bashful; (*adv*) blushingly. ANTONYMS: (*v*) blanch, pale, blench; (*n*) paleness.

ill-natured: (*adj*) cantankerous, peevish, sour, surly, catty, crabbed, gruff, disagreeable, malignant, malicious, malevolent.

insensible: (*adj*) imperceptible, numb, unconscious, callous, dull, unaware, apathetic, impassive, indiscernible, comatose, impassible. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) sensible, conscious, sensitive, awake, alive, compassionate, concerned, aware.

nancy: (*n*) Nanchang.

rend: (*v*) pull, lacerate, break, divide, rive, tear, disrupt, mangle; (*n, v*) rip, split, slash.

sisterly: (*adj*) sororal, fatherly, motherly, sisterlike. ANTONYM: (*adj*) brotherly.

unapproachable: (*adj*) aloof, distant, remote, interminable, unreachable, immeasurable, incalculable, inexhaustible, illimitable, innumerable, out of reach. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) accessible, friendly, easy, affable.

"Oh, no, sir, I don't mean to say what's ill-natured at all," said Nancy, looking distractingly prim and pretty. "When gentlemen have so many **pleasures**, one dance can matter but very little."

"You know that isn't true. You know one dance with you matters more to me than all the other pleasures in the world."

It was a long, long while since Godfrey had said anything so direct as that, and Nancy was **startled**. But her instinctive dignity and repugnance to any show of emotion made her sit perfectly still, and only throw a little more decision into her voice, as she said--

"No, indeed, Mr. Godfrey, that's not known to me, and I have very good reasons for thinking different. But if it's true, I don't wish to hear it."

"Would you never forgive me, then, Nancy--never think well of me, let what would happen--would you never think the present made **amends** for the past? Not if I turned a good fellow, and gave up everything you didn't like?"

Godfrey was half conscious that this sudden opportunity of speaking to Nancy alone had driven him beside himself; but blind feeling had got the **mastery** of his tongue. Nancy really felt much **agitated** by the possibility Godfrey's words suggested, but this very pressure of emotion that she was in danger of finding too strong for her **roused** all her power of self-command.

"I should be glad to see a good change in anybody, Mr. Godfrey," she answered, with the slightest discernible difference of tone, "but it 'ud be better if no change was wanted."

"You're very **hard**-hearted, Nancy," said Godfrey, **pettishly**. "You might encourage me to be a better fellow. I'm very miserable--but you've no feeling."

"I think those have the least feeling that act wrong to begin with," said Nancy, sending out a flash in spite of herself. Godfrey was delighted with that little flash, and would have liked to go on and make her quarrel with him; Nancy was so **exasperatingly** quiet and firm. But she was not indifferent to him *yet*, though--

Thesaurus

agitated: (*adj*) upset, excited, nervous, restive, tumultuous, distressed, tense, jumpy, overwrought, anxious, alarmed. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) calm, lethargic, tranquil, relaxed, assured, cool, still.

amends: (*n*) atonement, compensation, recompense, satisfaction, redress, damages, reprisal, indemnity, requital; (*n, v*) restitution, restoration.

exasperatingly: (*adv*) maddeningly, annoyingly, infuriatingly, irksomely, provokingly, tediously, gallingly, tiresomely, aggravatingly, vexingly, nauseatingly.

hard-hearted: (*adj*) remorseless, ruthless, unkind, obdurate, pitiless, heartless, merciless, unaffected, unconcerned, uninterested, cold-blooded.

mastery: (*n*) dominance, dominion, command, domination, ascendancy, ascendency, control, authority, mastership, supremacy, ascendance.

pettishly: (*adv*) testily, irritably, crossly, tetchily, peevishly, techily, huffily, touchily, fractiously, fretfully, moodily.

pleasures: (*n*) pleasure.

roused: (*adj*) excited, awake, susceptible, emotional, elated, interested.

startled: (*adj*) dumbfounded, dismayed, distressed, aghast, frightened, astonished, amazed, terrified, afraid, shocked, astounded.

The entrance of Priscilla, **bustling** forward and saying, "Dear heart alive, child, let us look at this gown," cut off Godfrey's hopes of a quarrel.

"I suppose I must go now," he said to Priscilla.

"It's no matter to me **whether** you go or stay," said that frank lady, **searching** for something in her pocket, with a **preoccupied brow**.

"Do *you* want me to go?" said Godfrey, looking at Nancy, who was now standing up by Priscilla's order.

"As you like," said Nancy, trying to recover all her former **coldness**, and looking down carefully at the hem of her gown.

"Then I like to stay," said Godfrey, with a **reckless** determination to get as much of this joy as he could to-night, and think nothing of the **morrow**.

Thesaurus

brow: (*n*) peak, brink, brows, height, summit, forehead, eyebrow, edge, crown, brim, border. ANTONYM: (*n*) trough.
bustling: (*adj*) lively, busy, boisterous, buzzing, brisk, alive, vibrant, noisy, tumultuous; (*v*) stirring, full of incident. ANTONYM: (*adj*) inactive.
coldness: (*n*) chilliness, coolness, indifference, distance, apathy, iciness, reserve, frost, frigidity, unconcern; (*adj, n*) cold. ANTONYMS: (*n*) friendliness, sympathy, sensitivity, hotness, heat, responsiveness, concern, brightness, kindness.
morrow: (*n*) morning, future, mean solar day, day.
preoccupied: (*adj*) absorbed, abstracted, thoughtful, lost, rapt, distracted, faraway, inattentive, deep in thought, engrossed, pensive. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) alert, carefree, uninterested.
reckless: (*adj*) careless, rash, foolhardy, hasty, incautious, extravagant, daring, desperate, brash; (*adj, v*) imprudent, wanton. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) cautious, prudent, sensible, wise, responsible, parsimonious, considered, safe, guarded, dutiful, discreet.
searching: (*adj*) piercing, inquisitive, probing, acute, exhaustive, curious, inquiring, profound, exploratory; (*adj, v*) cutting; (*v*) excruciating.
whether: (*pron*) where.

CHAPTER XII

While Godfrey Cass was taking draughts of forgetfulness from the sweet presence of Nancy, willingly losing all sense of that hidden bond which at other moments **galled** and **fretted** him so as to **mingle** irritation with the very sunshine, Godfrey's wife was walking with slow uncertain steps through the snow-covered Raveloe lanes, carrying her child in her arms.

This journey on New Year's Eve was a **premeditated** act of vengeance which she had kept in her heart ever since Godfrey, in a fit of passion, had told her he would sooner die than acknowledge her as his wife. There would be a great party at the Red House on New Year's Eve, she knew: her husband would be smiling and smiled upon, hiding *her* existence in the darkest corner of his heart. But she would mar his pleasure: she would go in her **dingy** rags, with her faded face, once as handsome as the best, with her little child that had its father's hair and eyes, and disclose herself to the Squire as his **eldest** son's wife. It is seldom that the miserable can help regarding their misery as a wrong inflicted by those who are less miserable. Molly knew that the cause of her dingy rags was not her husband's neglect, but the **demon** Opium to whom she was **enslaved**, body and soul, except in the lingering mother's tenderness that refused to give him her hungry child. She knew this well; and yet, in the moments of wretched unbenumbed consciousness, the sense of her want and degradation transformed itself continually into bitterness towards Godfrey. *He* was well off; and if she

Thesaurus

demon: (*n*) ghost, fiend, incubus, monster, daemon, ogre, daimon, goblin, deuce, genie, elf. ANTONYM: (*n*) saint.
dingy: (*adj*) dark, black, drab, dull, muddy, impure, dim, seedy, dowdy, unclean, grimy. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) immaculate, spotless, sparkling, bright, neat, brilliant, interesting, smart.
eldest: (*adj*) elder, older, oldest, eigne; (*n*) offspring, progeny, doyen.
enslaved: (*adj*) captive, locked up, charmed, incarcerated, in bondage, in prison, bound, subject, beguiled, cringing; (*v*) subjected.
fretted: (*adj*) latticed, haggard, magged, latticelike, reticulated, reticular, interlaced. ANTONYM: (*adj*) unfretted.
galled: (*adj*) chafed, uncomfortable, chilly, bleak, bare, bald, angry, painful.
mingle: (*v*) compound, combine, merge, amalgamate, intermix, mix, commingle, associate, confuse, join, intermingle. ANTONYM: (*v*) part.
premeditated: (*adj*) intentional, planned, designed, conscious, calculated, studied, intended, prearranged; (*v*) prepense; (*adj, v*) aforethought, premeditate. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) accidental, ingenuous, spontaneous, unintentional, unpremeditated, automatic, casual.

had her rights she would be well off too. The belief that he repented his marriage, and **suffered** from it, only aggravated her **vindictiveness**. Just and self-reproving thoughts do not come to us too thickly, even in the purest air, and with the best lessons of heaven and earth; how should those white-winged delicate messengers make their way to Molly's poisoned chamber, inhabited by no higher memories than those of a barmaid's paradise of pink ribbons and gentlemen's jokes?

She had set out at an early hour, but had lingered on the road, inclined by her **indolence** to believe that if she waited under a warm shed the snow would cease to fall. She had waited longer than she knew, and now that she found herself belated in the snow-hidden **ruggedness** of the long lanes, even the animation of a vindictive purpose could not keep her spirit from failing. It was seven o'clock, and by this time she was not very far from Raveloe, but she was not familiar enough with those monotonous lanes to know how near she was to her journey's end. She needed comfort, and she knew but one comforter--the familiar demon in her bosom; but she hesitated a moment, after drawing out the black remnant, before she raised it to her lips. In that moment the mother's love pleaded for painful consciousness rather than oblivion--pleaded to be left in aching **weariness**, rather than to have the **encircling** arms benumbed so that they could not feel the dear burden. In another moment Molly had flung something away, but it was not the black remnant--it was an empty **phial**. And she walked on again under the breaking cloud, from which there came now and then the light of a quickly veiled star, for a freezing wind had sprung up since the snowing had ceased. But she walked always more and more **drowsily**, and clutched more and more automatically the sleeping child at her bosom.

Slowly the demon was working his will, and cold and weariness were his helpers. Soon she felt nothing but a supreme immediate longing that curtained off all futurity--the longing to lie down and sleep. She had arrived at a spot where her footsteps were no longer checked by a hedgerow, and she had wandered vaguely, unable to distinguish any objects, notwithstanding the wide whiteness around her, and the growing **starlight**. She sank down against a

Thesaurus

drowsily: (*adv*) sleepily, lethargically, somnolently, lazily, dozily, indolently, sluggishly, soporifically, slowly, dreamily, languorously. ANTONYM: (*adv*) vigorously.
encircling: (*adj, prep*) surrounding; (*prep*) around; (*adj*) comprehensive, encompassing, roundabout, circuitous, rotary, circumferential, inclusive; (*v*) encircle.
indolence: (*n*) laziness, inaction, lethargy, inertia, inactivity, listlessness, slowness, torpor, sluggishness, apathy; (*adj, n*) sloth. ANTONYMS: (*n*) energy, nimbleness, activity, bustle, liveliness, vigor.
phial: (*n*) ampoule, bottle, cruet, ampul, ampule, noggin, caster, flask, stoup.
ruggedness: (*n*) inclemency, toughness, huskiness, gruffness, severity, asperity, austerity, coarseness, hardness, craggedness, formidability.
starlight: (*n*) rushlight, moonlight, firelight, candlelight.
suffered: (*adj*) permitted, permissive.
vindictiveness: (*n*) rancor, revenge, malice, spite, unkindness, nastiness, spitefulness, meanness, malignity, malevolence, implacability.
weariness: (*n*) exhaustion, tiredness, lassitude, languor, asthenopia, defatigation, grogginess, listlessness, boredom, ennui, prostration.

straggling furze bush, an easy pillow enough; and the bed of snow, too, was soft. She did not feel that the bed was cold, and did not heed whether the child would wake and cry for her. But her arms had not yet relaxed their instinctive clutch; and the little one slumbered on as gently as if it had been rocked in a lace-trimmed cradle.

But the complete **torpor** came at last: the fingers lost their tension, the arms **unbent**; then the little head fell away from the bosom, and the blue eyes opened wide on the cold starlight. At first there was a little **peevish** cry of "mammy", and an effort to regain the pillowing arm and bosom; but mammy's ear was deaf, and the pillow seemed to be slipping away backward. Suddenly, as the child rolled downward on its mother's knees, all wet with snow, its eyes were caught by a bright glancing light on the white ground, and, with the ready transition of infancy, it was immediately absorbed in watching the bright living thing running towards it, yet never arriving. That bright living thing must be caught; and in an instant the child had slipped on all-fours, and held out one little hand to catch the gleam. But the gleam would not be caught in that way, and now the head was held up to see where the cunning gleam came from. It came from a very bright place; and the little one, rising on its legs, toddled through the snow, the old **grimy** shawl in which it was wrapped trailing behind it, and the queer little bonnet dangling at its back--toddled on to the open door of Silas Marner's cottage, and right up to the warm hearth, where there was a bright fire of logs and sticks, which had thoroughly warmed the old sack (Silas's greatcoat) spread out on the bricks to dry. The little one, accustomed to be left to itself for long hours without notice from its mother, squatted down on the sack, and spread its tiny hands towards the blaze, in perfect contentment, gurgling and making many **inarticulate** communications to the cheerful fire, like a new-hatched **gosling** beginning to find itself comfortable. But presently the warmth had a **lulling** effect, and the little golden head sank down on the old sack, and the blue eyes were veiled by their delicate half-transparent lids.

But where was Silas Marner while this strange visitor had come to his hearth? He was in the cottage, but he did not see the child. During the last few weeks,

Thesaurus

furze: (*n*) gorse, Irish gorse, Ulex europaeus, Needle furze, shrub, bush, bramble, dyeweed.
gosling: (*n*) gesling, goose, young goose.
grimy: (*adj*) dirty, filthy, grubby, dingy, unclean, impure, nasty, begrimed, squalid, messy, muddy. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) pure, pleasant.
inarticulate: (*adj*) unintelligible, silent, vague, muffled, incoherent, mute, incomprehensible, unarticulate, speechless, guttural, fuzzy. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) articulate, eloquent, fluent, distinct, talkative.
lulling: (*adj*) drowsy, assuasive, dreamy, dull, lethargic, quietening, unalarming, dozy; (*n*) appeasement.
peevish: (*adj*) fretful, fractious, morose, testy, irascible, moody, captious, petulant, cross, cantankerous, touchy.
straggling: (*adj*) rambling, straggly, spread, few, trailing, untidy, vagabond, sprawly, sprawled. ANTONYM: (*adj*) compact.
torpor: (*n*) lethargy, lassitude, stupor, languor, indolence, sluggishness, listlessness, torpidity, torpidness; (*adj, n*) inactivity, inertia. ANTONYMS: (*n*) energy, vigor, activity.
unbent: (*adj*) straight, upright, erect, neat, level, consecutive, good, just, accurately fitted; (*v*) virgate; (*n*) erecter.

since he had lost his money, he had contracted the habit of opening his door and looking out from time to time, as if he thought that his money might be somehow coming back to him, or that some trace, some news of it, might be mysteriously on the road, and be caught by the listening ear or the straining eye. It was chiefly at night, when he was not occupied in his loom, that he fell into this repetition of an act for which he could have assigned no definite purpose, and which can hardly be understood except by those who have undergone a **bewildering** separation from a **supremely** loved object. In the evening twilight, and later whenever the night was not dark, Silas looked out on that narrow prospect round the Stone-pits, listening and **gazing**, not with hope, but with mere yearning and unrest.

This morning he had been told by some of his neighbours that it was New Year's Eve, and that he must sit up and hear the old year rung out and the new rung in, because that was good luck, and might bring his money back again. This was only a friendly Raveloe-way of **jesting** with the half-crazy oddities of a miser, but it had perhaps helped to throw Silas into a more than usually excited state. Since the on-coming of twilight he had opened his door again and again, though only to shut it immediately at seeing all distance veiled by the falling snow. But the last time he opened it the snow had ceased, and the clouds were parting here and there. He stood and listened, and gazed for a long while--there was really something on the road coming towards him then, but he caught no sign of it; and the stillness and the wide **trackless** snow seemed to narrow his solitude, and touched his yearning with the chill of despair. He went in again, and put his right hand on the latch of the door to close it--but he did not close it: he was arrested, as he had been already since his loss, by the invisible **wand** of **catalepsy**, and stood like a **graven** image, with wide but **sightless** eyes, holding open his door, powerless to resist either the good or the evil that might enter there.

When Marner's sensibility returned, he continued the action which had been arrested, and closed his door, unaware of the **chasm** in his consciousness, unaware of any intermediate change, except that the light had grown dim, and

Thesaurus

bewildering: (*adj*) astonishing, puzzling, perplexing, confusing, marvelous, mystifying, amazing, astounding, discomfit, upsetting, staggering. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) enlightening, simple, soothing.
catalepsy: (*adj*) trance, catalepsis, fixity, immobility.
chasm: (*n*) breach, gap, hiatus, gulf, ravine, hole, abysm, vacancy, canyon, aperture, emptiness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) junction, closure.
gazing: (*adj*) fixed.
graven: (*adj*) carved, engraved, etched, sculptured, sculptile, sculpted, inscribed, carven.
jesting: (*adj*) jocular, jocose, facetious, humorous, playful; (*n*) banter, humor, comedy, pleasantry, fun, joke. ANTONYM: (*n*) tragedy.
sightless: (*adj*) blind, viewless, unseeing, invisible, unsighted, visionless, lacking sight, seemless, blinder.
supremely: (*adv*) sovereignly, perfectly, preeminently, utmostly, principally, extremely, greatly, paramountly, ideally, uppermostly, ultimately.
trackless: (*adj*) shoreless, roadless, unaccessible, inaccessible, lacking pathways, untracked, untrodden, untrod.
wand: (*n, v*) stick, rod; (*n*) scepter, verge, mace, pole, baton, sceptre, fasces, rod of empire; (*v*) staff.

that he was **chilled** and faint. He thought he had been too long standing at the door and looking out. Turning towards the hearth, where the two logs had fallen apart, and sent forth only a red uncertain **glimmer**, he seated himself on his fireside chair, and was **stooping** to push his logs together, when, to his blurred vision, it seemed as if there were gold on the floor in front of the hearth. Gold!--his own gold--brought back to him as mysteriously as it had been taken away! He felt his heart begin to beat violently, and for a few moments he was unable to stretch out his hand and grasp the restored treasure. The heap of gold seemed to glow and get larger beneath his agitated gaze. He leaned forward at last, and stretched forth his hand; but instead of the hard coin with the familiar **resisting** outline, his fingers encountered soft warm curls. In utter amazement, Silas fell on his knees and bent his head low to examine the **marvel**: it was a sleeping child--a round, fair thing, with soft yellow rings all over its head. Could this be his little sister come back to him in a dream-- his little sister whom he had carried about in his arms for a year before she died, when he was a small boy without shoes or stockings? That was the first thought that darted across Silas's blank wonderment. *Was* it a dream? He rose to his feet again, pushed his logs together, and, throwing on some dried leaves and sticks, raised a flame; but the flame did not **disperse** the vision-- it only lit up more distinctly the little round form of the child, and its shabby clothing. It was very much like his little sister. Silas sank into his chair powerless, under the double presence of an inexplicable surprise and a hurrying influx of memories. How and when had the child come in without his knowledge? He had never been beyond the door. But along with that question, and almost **thrusting** it away, there was a vision of the old home and the old **streets** leading to Lantern Yard--and within that vision another, of the thoughts which had been present with him in those far-off scenes. The thoughts were strange to him now, like old friendships impossible to revive; and yet he had a dreamy feeling that this child was somehow a message come to him from that far-off life: it stirred fibres that had never been moved in Raveloe--old quiverings of tenderness--old impressions of awe at the presentiment of some Power **presiding** over his life; for his imagination had not yet **extricated** itself from the sense of mystery in the child's sudden presence, and had formed no

Thesaurus

chilled: (*adj*) frozen, freezing, cool, refrigerated, icy, inhibited, restrained, confined, shivering, iced, stiff.
disperse: (*v*) dispel, spread, circulate, break up, disband, scatter, dissipate, diffuse, dispense, disseminate, break. ANTONYMS: (*v*) gather, collect, converge, centralize, capture, congregate, garner, concentrate, swarm, crowd, aggravate.
extricated: (*adj*) free, disengaged, freer, emancipated, freed.
glimmer: (*adj, n, v*) flicker, twinkle; (*n, v*) gleam, shimmer, flash, sparkle, beam, glow, shine; (*v*) blink; (*n*) gleaming.
marvel: (*n, v*) wonder; (*n*) prodigy, curiosity, phenomenon, amazement, miracle, portent, marl, surprise, admiration; (*v*) admire. ANTONYMS: (*v*) disregard; (*n*) nightmare.
presiding: (*adj*) president, dominant, administrative.
resisting: (*adj*) tough, tenacious, sequacious, stringy, tough as whitleather, resistant, recalcitrant, opposing, making resistance, loath; (*v*) resist.
stooping: (*adj*) hunched, crooked, asymmetrical, not erect, not straight, corrupt; (*n*) patronage.
streets: (*n*) street.
thrusting: (*n*) thrust, push, jab, poke, jabbing, stab, driving force, scoke, sack, punch, Phytolacca Americana.

conjectures of ordinary natural means by which the event could have been brought about.

But there was a cry on the hearth: the child had awaked, and Marner **stooped** to lift it on his knee. It clung round his neck, and burst louder and louder into that **mingling** of inarticulate cries with "mammy" by which little children express the **bewilderment** of **waking**. Silas pressed it to him, and almost unconsciously uttered sounds of hushing tenderness, while he bethought himself that some of his porridge, which had got cool by the dying fire, would do to feed the child with if it were only **warmed** up a little.

He had plenty to do through the next hour. The porridge, **sweetened** with some dry brown sugar from an old store which he had refrained from using for himself, stopped the cries of the little one, and made her lift her blue eyes with a wide quiet gaze at Silas, as he put the spoon into her mouth. Presently she slipped from his knee and began to **toddle** about, but with a pretty **stagger** that made Silas jump up and follow her lest she should fall against anything that would hurt her. But she only fell in a sitting posture on the ground, and began to pull at her boots, looking up at him with a crying face as if the boots hurt her. He took her on his knee again, but it was some time before it occurred to Silas's dull bachelor mind that the wet boots were the **grievance**, pressing on her warm ankles. He got them off with difficulty, and baby was at once happily occupied with the primary mystery of her own toes, inviting Silas, with much **chuckling**, to consider the mystery too. But the wet boots had at last suggested to Silas that the child had been walking on the snow, and this roused him from his entire oblivion of any ordinary means by which it could have entered or been brought into his house. Under the prompting of this new idea, and without waiting to form conjectures, he raised the child in his arms, and **went** to the door. As soon as he had opened it, there was the cry of "mammy" again, which Silas had not heard since the child's first hungry waking. Bending forward, he could just discern the marks made by the little feet on the virgin snow, and he followed their track to the furze bushes. "Mammy!" the little one cried again and again, stretching itself forward so as almost to escape from Silas's arms, before he

Thesaurus

bewilderment: (*n*) astonishment, quandary, confusion, surprise, wonder, bemusement, maze, chaos, jumble, mess; (*adj, n*) perplexity. ANTONYMS: (*n*) order, clarity.
chuckling: (*n*) laughter.
grievance: (*n*) injustice, wrong, grudge, affliction, protest, objection, disaffection, discontentment, dissatisfaction; (*adj*) annoyance; (*adj, n*) distress. ANTONYMS: (*n*) justice, praise.
mingling: (*adj*) blending, merging, confluent, blended; (*n*) mixture, mixing, commixtion, interchange, exchange, commixture; (*adv*) mingllingly.
stagger: (*adj, adv, v*) startle; (*v*) astonish, reel, shock, hobble, shake, flounder, totter; (*n, v*) lurch, pitch; (*adj, v*) flabbergast.
stooped: (*adj*) hunched, stoop, stooping, crooked, bended, not straight, inclined, not erect, arched, asymmetrical, droopy.
sweetened: (*adj*) sugared, syrupy, perfumed, scented, seraphic, sickly, sugary, sweet as sugar, tasty, angelic, palatable.
toddle: (*v*) paddle, stroll, saunter, walk, totter, coggle; (*n, v*) stride; (*n*) stalk, stump, strut, straddle.
waking: (*adj*) wakeful; (*n*) awakening, wakefulness, consciousness.
warmed: (*adj*) warmer, warm, baked.
went: (*v*) walked, proceeded.

himself was **aware** that there was something more than the **bush** before him--that there was a **human body**, with the head **sunk** low in the furze, and half-covered with the **shaken** snow.

Thesaurus

aware: (*adj*) awake, attentive, conscious, realize, vigilant, perceive, mindful, heedful, alive, sentient, sensible. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) unconscious, insensitive, ignorant, unfamiliar, unwitting, incognizant, unmindful, unconcerned, unprepared, oblivious, indifferent.
body: (*n*) cadaver, corpse, organization, cluster, set, carcass, figure, consistency, aggregate, association; (*adj, n*) mass. ANTONYMS: (*n*) handful, mind, minority, soul, few.
bush: (*n*) shrub, wild, jungle, hedge, outback, scrub, heath, plant, thicket, wilderness, chaparral.
himself: (*pron*) herself, themselves, yourself, itself; (*adj*) myself; (*n*) yourselves.
human: (*n*) person, man, human being, homo, gay, party; (*adj, adv*) fleshly; (*adj*) humane, earthly, corporeal, worldly. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) nonhuman, otherworldly, heavenly, immortal.
shaken: (*adj*) jolted, agitated, dilapidated, frayed; (*v*) passe, lame, broken, threadbare, wilted, shaky, vibrate.
sunk: (*adj*) sunken, undone, finished, ruined, profound, immersed, damaged, lowed, lying flat; (*v*) cut up, dashed.

CHAPTER XIII

It was after the early supper-time at the Red House, and the entertainment was in that stage when **bashfulness** itself had passed into easy **jollity**, when **gentlemen**, conscious of unusual **accomplishments**, could at length be prevailed on to dance a **hornpipe**, and when the Squire preferred talking loudly, scattering snuff, and patting his visitors' backs, to sitting longer at the whist-table--a choice exasperating to uncle Kimble, who, being always volatile in sober business hours, became intense and bitter over cards and brandy, **shuffled** before his adversary's deal with a glare of suspicion, and turned up a mean trump-card with an air of **inexpressible** disgust, as if in a world where such things could happen one might as well enter on a course of reckless **profligacy**. When the evening had advanced to this pitch of freedom and enjoyment, it was usual for the servants, the heavy duties of supper being well over, to get their share of amusement by coming to look on at the dancing; so that the back regions of the house were left in solitude.

There were two doors by which the White Parlour was entered from the hall, and they were both standing open for the sake of air; but the lower one was crowded with the servants and villagers, and only the upper doorway was left free. Bob Cass was **figuring** in a hornpipe, and his father, very proud of this lithe son, whom he repeatedly declared to be just like himself in his young days in a tone that implied this to be the very highest stamp of juvenile merit, was the

Thesaurus

accomplishments: (*n*) benefit, actions, background, Comings and Goings, deeds, events, happenings, activities.
bashfulness: (*n*) diffidence, shyness, coyness, humility, abashment, backwardness, reserve, timidity, constraint, embarrassment, stage fright.
figuring: (*n*) calculation, reckoning, estimation, computing, figure, approximation, conversion, derivative, differential, estimate, derived function.
gentlemen: (*n*) sirs, messieurs.
hornpipe: (*n*) bolero, stockhorn, rigadoon, saraband, folk dancing, pibgorn, folk dance, reel.
inexpressible: (*adj, v*) indescribable; (*adj*) ineffable, unspeakable, unutterable, indefinable, incommunicable, nameless, untold, beyond description, unexpressible, undefinable. ANTONYM: (*adj*) definite.
jollity: (*adj, n*) glee, joviality; (*n*) merriment, cheerfulness, festivity, frolic, gladness, hilarity, mirth, gaiety; (*adj*) jocundity. ANTONYMS: (*n*) seriousness, misery.
profligacy: (*n*) debauchery, dissipation, licentiousness, prodigality, dissolution, depravity, debauch, corruption, improvidence, dissoluteness, vice. ANTONYMS: (*n*) economy, decency, parsimony.
shuffled: (*adj*) disorganized.

centre of a group who had placed themselves opposite the **performer**, not far from the upper door. Godfrey was standing a little way off, not to admire his brother's dancing, but to keep sight of Nancy, who was seated in the group, near her father. He stood aloof, because he wished to avoid suggesting himself as a subject for the Squire's **fatherly** jokes in connection with **matrimony** and Miss Nancy Lammeter's beauty, which were likely to become more and more explicit. But he had the prospect of dancing with her again when the hornpipe was concluded, and in the meanwhile it was very pleasant to get long glances at her quite unobserved.

But when Godfrey was lifting his eyes from one of those long glances, they encountered an object as startling to him at that moment as if it had been an apparition from the dead. It *was* an apparition from that hidden life which lies, like a dark by-street, behind the **goodly** ornamented **facade** that meets the sunlight and the gaze of respectable admirers. It was his own child, **carried** in Silas Marner's arms. That was his **instantaneous** impression, **unaccompanied** by doubt, though he had not seen the child for months past; and when the hope was rising that he might possibly be mistaken, Mr. Crackenthorp and Mr. Lammeter had already advanced to Silas, in astonishment at this strange advent. Godfrey joined them immediately, unable to rest without hearing every word--trying to control himself, but conscious that if any one noticed him, they must see that he was white-lipped and trembling.

But now all eyes at that end of the room were bent on Silas Marner; the Squire himself had **risen**, and asked angrily, "How's this?-- what's this?--what do you do coming in here in this way?"

"I'm come for the doctor--I want the doctor," Silas had said, in the first moment, to Mr. Crackenthorp.

"Why, what's the matter, Marner?" said the rector. "The doctor's here; but say quietly what you want him for."

"It's a woman," said Silas, speaking low, and half-breathlessly, just as Godfrey came up. "She's dead, I think--dead in the snow at the Stone-pits--not far from my door."

Thesaurus

carried: (*adj*) conveyed, imported.
facade: (*n*) appearance, outside, face, front, veneer, pretense, disguise, surface, guise, semblance, frontispiece. ANTONYMS: (*n*) interior, substance, rear, genuine.
fatherly: (*adj*) fatherlike, loving, motherly, sisterly, parental, affectionate, benevolent, benign; (*adj, adv*) kind; (*adv*) patriarchal, indulgent. ANTONYM: (*adv*) motherly.
goodly: (*adv*) benignly, kindly, strongly, rightly, graciously, virtuously, soundly, uprightly; (*adj*) sizable, handsome, respectable.
instantaneous: (*adj*) immediate, prompt, sudden, precipitate, momentary, abrupt, precipitous, precipitant, swift, momentaneous, quick. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) gradual, delayed, considered.
matrimony: (*n*) wedding, union, marriage ceremony, nuptials, endogamy, bigamy, intermixture, alloyage, exogamy, intermarriage; (*n, v*) wedlock.
performer: (*n*) musician, doer, artiste, comedian, player, conjurer, juggler, magician, executant, thespian, agent.
risen: (*v*) uprise.
unaccompanied: (*adj*) lone, solitary, unescorted, unaided, unattended; (*adj, adv*) only, on your own, without help; (*adv*) solo, singly, by yourself. ANTONYM: (*adj*) together.

Godfrey felt a great **throb**: there was one terror in his mind at that moment: it was, that the woman might *not* be dead. That was an evil terror--an ugly **inmate** to have found a nestling-place in Godfrey's kindly disposition; but no disposition is a security from evil wishes to a man whose happiness hangs on duplicity.

"Hush, hush!" said Mr. Crackenthorp. "Go out into the hall there. I'll fetch the doctor to you. Found a woman in the snow-- and thinks she's dead," he added, speaking low to the Squire. "Better say as little about it as possible: it will shock the ladies. Just tell them a poor woman is ill from cold and hunger. I'll go and fetch Kimble."

By this time, however, the ladies had pressed forward, curious to know what could have brought the **solitary** linen-weaver there under such strange circumstances, and interested in the pretty child, who, half alarmed and half attracted by the **brightness** and the numerous company, now **frowned** and hid her face, now lifted up her head again and looked round placably, until a touch or a **coaxing** word brought back the frown, and made her bury her face with new determination.

"What child is it?" said several ladies at once, and, among the rest, Nancy Lammeter, addressing Godfrey.

"I don't know--some poor woman's who has been found in the snow, I believe," was the answer Godfrey wrung from himself with a terrible effort. ("After all, *am* I certain?" he **hastened** to add, silently, in anticipation of his own conscience.)

"Why, you'd better leave the child here, then, Master Marner," said good-natured Mrs. Kimble, hesitating, however, to take those dingy clothes into contact with her own ornamented **satin bodice**. "I'll tell one o' the girls to fetch it."

"No--no--I can't part with it, I can't let it go," said Silas, abruptly. "It's come to me--I've a right to keep it."

The proposition to take the child from him had come to Silas quite unexpectedly, and his speech, uttered under a strong sudden impulse, was

Thesaurus

bodice: (*n*) corsage, stays, corset, brassiere, top, slip, waist, corselet.
brightness: (*n*) luminance, light, shine, clarity, lustre, glow, glare, glitter, luminosity; (*n, v*) illumination, gloss. ANTONYMS: (*n*) cloudiness, murkiness, dimness, darkness, mistiness, softness, sadness, bleakness, dirtiness, pessimism; (*adv*) seriously.
coaxing: (*n*) blarney, flattery, sweet talk, temptation, enticement, soft soap; (*adv*) coaxingly; (*adj*) ingratiatory, persuasive, oily.
frown: (*adj, v*) lower; (*adj, n*) scowl; (*n, v*) pout, grimace, glower, glare; (*adj*) black looks, gloam, glout; (*v*) sulk, gnash. ANTONYM: (*v*) approve.
hastened: (*adj*) careless.
inmate: (*n*) captive, convict, gaolbird, denizen, prisoner, con, patient, jailbird, lodger, occupant, resident. ANTONYM: (*n*) outpatient.
satin: (*adj*) glossy, sleek, velvet, down, silky, silklike, silken, satiny, velure; (*n*) cloth, fabric.
solitary: (*adj*) forlorn, only, alone, single, lonely, lone, sole, unaccompanied, isolated; (*adj, n*) recluse; (*n*) hermit. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) sociable, combined, common, outgoing.
throb: (*n, v*) quiver, ache, pulse, pound, thrill, tingle; (*v*) pulsate, palpitate, flutter, shudder; (*n*) pulsation.

almost like a revelation to himself: a minute before, he had no distinct intention about the child.

"Did you ever hear the like?" said Mrs. Kimble, in mild surprise, to her neighbour.

"Now, ladies, I must trouble you to stand aside," said Mr. Kimble, coming from the card-room, in some bitterness at the **interruption**, but drilled by the long habit of his profession into **obedience** to unpleasant **calls**, even when he was hardly **sober**.

"It's a nasty business turning out now, eh, Kimble?" said the Squire. "He might ha' gone for your young fellow--the 'prentice, there--what's his name?"

"Might? aye--what's the use of talking about might?" growled uncle Kimble, hastening out with Marner, and followed by Mr. Crackenthorp and Godfrey. "Get me a pair of thick boots, Godfrey, will you? And stay, let somebody run to Winthrop's and fetch Dolly--she's the best woman to get. Ben was here himself before supper; is he gone?"

"Yes, sir, I met him," said Marner; "but I couldn't stop to tell him anything, only I said I was going for the doctor, and he said the doctor was at the Squire's. And I made haste and ran, and there was nobody to be seen at the back o' the house, and so I went in to where the company was."

The child, no longer **distracted** by the bright light and the smiling women's faces, began to cry and call for "mammy", though always **clinging** to Marner, who had apparently won her thorough confidence. Godfrey had come back with the boots, and felt the cry as if some fibre were drawn tight within him.

"I'll go," he said, hastily, eager for some movement; "I'll go and fetch the woman--Mrs. Winthrop."

"Oh, pooh--send somebody else," said uncle Kimble, **hurrying** away with Marner.

"You'll let me know if I can be of any use, Kimble," said Mr. Crackenthorp. But the doctor was out of hearing.

Thesaurus

calls: (*n*) securities, puts, bonds, preferred stock, common stock.
clinging: (*adj*) adhering, sticky, adherent, devoted, adhering closely, affectionate, dependent, tenacious, osculant; (*n*) coherence.
distracted: (*adj*) demented, inattentive, abstracted, crazy, frenzied, distraught, preoccupied, distressed, confused; (*adj, v*) mad, disconcerted. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) attentive, alert, assured, calm, mellow.
hurrying: (*n*) hastening, speed, quickening, rushing, early, speeding, speeding up, stepping up, amphetamine, forward, eager.
interruption: (*n*) disruption, intermission, halt, pause, suspension, discontinuance, hiatus; (*n, v*) break, hindrance, impediment; (*v*) interrupt. ANTONYMS: (*n*) permanence, help, respect.
obedience: (*n*) meekness, submission, deference, obeisance, acquiescence, subordination, bow, observance, docility, loyalty, allegiance. ANTONYMS: (*n*) disobedience, defiance, naughtiness, resistance, divergence, chaos, wildness.
sober: (*adj, v*) grave, sedate; (*adj*) sane, earnest, quiet, solemn, moderate, modest, serene, dull, somber. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) intoxicated, unrestrained, drunk, playful, sensational, emotional, cheerful, frivolous, funny, muddled, delirious.

Godfrey, too, had disappeared: he was gone to snatch his hat and coat, having just reflection enough to remember that he must not look like a madman; but he rushed out of the house into the snow without heeding his thin shoes.

In a few minutes he was on his rapid way to the Stone-pits by the side of Dolly, who, though feeling that she was entirely in her place in encountering cold and snow on an errand of mercy, was much concerned at a young gentleman's getting his feet wet under a like impulse.

"You'd a deal better go back, sir," said Dolly, with respectful compassion. "You've no call to catch cold; and I'd ask you if you'd be so good as tell my husband to come, on your way back-- he's at the Rainbow, I doubt--if you found him anyway sober enough to be o' use. Or else, there's Mrs. Snell 'ud happen send the boy up to fetch and carry, for there may be things wanted from the doctor's."

"No, I'll stay, now I'm once out--I'll stay outside here," said Godfrey, when they came opposite Marner's cottage. "You can come and tell me if I can do anything."

"Well, sir, you're very good: you've a tender heart," said Dolly, going to the door.

Godfrey was too painfully preoccupied to feel a **twinge** of **self**-reproach at this **undeserved** praise. He walked up and down, unconscious that he was **plunging** ankle-deep in snow, unconscious of everything but trembling suspense about what was going on in the cottage, and the effect of each alternative on his future lot. No, not quite unconscious of everything else. Deeper down, and half-smothered by passionate desire and dread, there was the sense that he ought not to be waiting on these alternatives; that he ought to accept the consequences of his **deeds**, own the miserable wife, and fulfil the claims of the helpless child. But he had not moral courage enough to contemplate that active **renunciation** of Nancy as possible for him: he had only conscience and heart enough to make him for ever uneasy under the weakness that **forbade** the renunciation. And at this moment his mind leaped away from all restraint toward the sudden prospect of **deliverance** from his long **bondage**.

Thesaurus

bondage: (*n*) thrall, thraldom, thralldom, slavery, captivity, enslavement, duress, restraint, yoke, vassalage; (*adj, n*) villenage. ANTONYMS: (*n*) independence, emancipation, freedom.

deeds: (*n*) works, activity, actions, conduct, background, events, happenings, performance, activities.

deliverance: (*n*) salvation, rescue, release, freedom, escape, emancipation, delivery, relief, liberation, liberty, salvage. ANTONYMS: (*n*) downfall, suppression.

forbade: (*v*) prohibit, to prohibit.

plunging: (*adv*) diving, headlong, pitching, headfirst; (*adj*) precipitous, low, plummeting; (*n*) descent.

renunciation: (*n*) denial, resignation, abnegation, disclaimer, rejection, renouncement, abandonment, waiver, desertion, defection, relinquishment. ANTONYMS: (*n*) confirmation, assertion, reassertion, acceptance.

self-reproach: (*n*) regret, repentance, shame, penitence, contrition, guilt.

twinge: (*n, v*) pinch, sting; (*n*) pang, pain, stab, hurt, throb, qualm; (*v*) nip, prick, prickle.

undeserved: (*adj*) unfair, unearned, unjust, inequitable, undue, excessive, iniquitous, wrong, unreasonable, unwarranted. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) rightful, fair, just.

"Is she dead?" said the voice that predominated over every other within him. "If she is, I may marry Nancy; and then I shall be a good fellow in future, and have no secrets, and the child--shall be taken care of somehow." But across that vision came the other possibility--"She may live, and then it's all up with me."

Godfrey never knew how long it was before the door of the cottage opened and Mr. Kimble came out. He went forward to meet his uncle, prepared to suppress the **agitation** he must feel, whatever news he was to hear.

"I waited for you, as I'd come so far," he said, speaking first.

"Pooh, it was nonsense for you to come out: why didn't you send one of the men? There's nothing to be done. She's dead--has been dead for hours, I should say."

"What sort of woman is she?" said Godfrey, feeling the blood rush to his face.

"A young woman, but **emaciated**, with long black hair. Some vagrant-- quite in **rags**. She's got a wedding-ring on, however. They must fetch her away to the **workhouse** to-morrow. Come, come along."

"I want to look at her," said Godfrey. "I think I saw such a woman yesterday. I'll overtake you in a minute or two."

Mr. Kimble went on, and Godfrey turned back to the cottage. He cast only one glance at the dead face on the pillow, which Dolly had **smoothed** with decent care; but he remembered that last look at his unhappy hated wife so well, that at the end of sixteen years every line in the worn face was present to him when he told the full story of this night.

He turned immediately towards the hearth, where Silas Marner sat lulling the child. She was perfectly quiet now, but not asleep-- only **soothed** by sweet porridge and warmth into that wide-gazing calm which makes us older human beings, with our inward **turmoil**, feel a certain awe in the presence of a little child, such as we feel before some quiet majesty or beauty in the earth or sky--before a steady **glowing** planet, or a full-flowered **eglantine**, or the bending trees

Thesaurus

agitation: (*n*) disturbance, excitement, tumult, stirring, convulsion, stir, commotion, emotion, unrest, shake, turmoil. ANTONYMS: (*n*) serenity, calm, equanimity, rest, peace, deterrent.
eglantine: (*n*) briar, sweetbrier, rose, sweetbriar, eglatere, catbrier, bullbrier, brierpatch, briar pipe, brier patch.
emaciated: (*adj*) bony, lean, thin, gaunt, skinny, meager, wasted, haggard, slender, slim, lanky. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) fat, obese, heavy, bloated, beefy, overweight.
glowing: (*adj, n*) enthusiastic, cordial, passionate; (*adj*) burning, fervent, blazing, flaming, fiery, dazzling; (*adj, v*) warm; (*adj, adv*) aglow. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) pale, wan, unhappy, unenthusiastic, derogatory, dispassionate, unwell.
rags: (*adj*) refuse, rubble, scourings, sweepings, trash, waste; (*n*) clothing, tatter, orts, odds and ends, dress.
smoothed: (*adj*) round, smoothened, curved. ANTONYM: (*adj*) sharp.
soothed: (*adj*) composed.
turmoil: (*n, v*) commotion; (*n*) disturbance, agitation, disorder, hubbub, confusion, excitement, flurry, mess, hullabaloo, disruption. ANTONYMS: (*n*) order, calm, peace, accord.
workhouse: (*n*) workshop, almshouse, shop, jail, gaol, jailhouse, labor, clink.

over a silent **pathway**. The wide-open blue eyes looked up at Godfrey's without any **uneasiness** or sign of recognition: the child could make no visible **audible** claim on its father; and the father felt a strange mixture of feelings, a conflict of regret and joy, that the pulse of that little heart had no response for the half-jealous **yearning** in his own, when the blue eyes turned away from him slowly, and fixed themselves on the weaver's **queer** face, which was bent low down to look at them, while the small hand began to pull Marner's withered cheek with loving disfiguration.

"You'll take the child to the parish to-morrow?" asked Godfrey, speaking as indifferently as he could.

"Who says so?" said Marner, sharply. "Will they make me take her?"

"Why, you wouldn't like to keep her, should you--an old bachelor like you?"

"Till anybody shows they've a right to take her away from me," said Marner. "The mother's dead, and I reckon it's got no father: it's a lone thing--and I'm a lone thing. My money's gone, I don't know where--and this is come from I don't know where. I know nothing--I'm partly mazed."

"Poor little thing!" said Godfrey. "Let me give something towards finding it clothes."

He had put his hand in his pocket and found half-a-guinea, and, thrusting it into Silas's hand, he hurried out of the cottage to overtake Mr. Kimble.

"Ah, I see it's not the same woman I saw," he said, as he came up. "It's a pretty little child: the old fellow seems to want to keep it; that's strange for a miser like him. But I **gave** him a **trifle** to help him out: the parish isn't likely to quarrel with him for the right to keep the child."

"No; but I've seen the time when I might have quarrelled with him for it myself. It's too late now, though. If the child ran into the fire, your aunt's too fat to overtake it: she could only sit and **grunt** like an alarmed sow. But what a fool you are, Godfrey, to come out in your dancing shoes and stockings in this way--and you one of the beaux of the evening, and at your own house! What do you

Thesaurus

audible: (*adj*) plain, hearable, distinct, detectable, sounding, sharp, sonic, definite, discernible, perceptible, sensory. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) inaudible, unintelligible, undetectable, silent, faint.

gave: (*v*) deliver, allow, allot, provide, furnish, impart, administer; (*n*) gives.

grunt: (*v*) growl, croak, mutter, complain, murmur, moan, clamor, mumble; (*n, v*) cry; (*n*) groan, cottonwick.

pathway: (*n*) lane, road, path, footpath, course, trail, alley, highway, way, tract, track.

queer: (*adj*) fantastic, odd, eccentric, funny, curious, gay, peculiar, strange, quaint, fishy, outlandish. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) conventional, normal, well.

trifle: (*n, v*) play; (*adj, n, v*) trinket; (*v*) dally, fiddle, flirt, fool, frivol; (*n*) nothing, triviality, detail; (*adj, n*) bagatelle.

uneasiness: (*n*) disquiet, discomfort, inquietude, anxiety, unease, malaise, disquietude, apprehension, unrest, impatience; (*n, v*) agitation. ANTONYMS: (*n*) peace, calm, confidence.

yearning: (*n*) hankering, aspiration, thirst, craving, desire, hunger, nostalgia, eagerness; (*adj*) wistful, pining, desirous. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) disinterested; (*n*) dislike, disinclination, apathy.

mean by such **freaks**, young fellow? Has Miss Nancy been cruel, and do you want to spite her by **spoiling** your pumps?"

"Oh, everything has been disagreeable to-night. I was tired to death of jigging and gallanting, and that bother about the hornpipes. And I'd got to dance with the other Miss Gunn," said Godfrey, glad of the **subterfuge** his uncle had suggested to him.

The prevarication and white lies which a mind that keeps itself **ambitiously** pure is as uneasy under as a great artist under the false touches that no eye detects but his own, are worn as lightly as mere **trimmings** when once the actions have become a lie.

Godfrey **reappeared** in the White Parlour with dry feet, and, since the truth must be told, with a sense of relief and gladness that was too strong for painful thoughts to struggle with. For could he not venture now, whenever opportunity offered, to say the tenderest things to Nancy Lammeter--to promise her and himself that he would always be just what she would desire to see him? There was no danger that his dead wife would be recognized: those were not days of active inquiry and wide report; and as for the **registry** of their marriage, that was a long way off, buried in **unturned** pages, away from every one's interest but his own. Dunsey might betray him if he came back; but Dunsey might be won to silence.

And when events turn out so much better for a man than he has had reason to dread, is it not a proof that his conduct has been less foolish and **blameworthy** than it might otherwise have appeared? When we are treated well, we naturally begin to think that we are not altogether unmeritorious, and that it is only just we should treat ourselves well, and not mar our own good fortune. Where, after all, would be the use of his **confessing** the past to Nancy Lammeter, and throwing away his happiness?--nay, **hers**? for he felt some confidence that she loved him. As for the child, he would see that it was cared for: he would never forsake it; he would do everything but own it. Perhaps it would be just as happy in life without being owned by its father, seeing that nobody could tell how

Thesaurus

ambitiously: (*adv*) eagerly, aspiringly, challengingly, enterprisingly, difficultly, energetically, vaultingly, pretentiously, avidly, hopefully, desirously.
appeared: (*n*) appearing.
blameworthy: (*adj, v*) reprehensible, uncommendable; (*adj*) guilty, blamable, blameful, censurable, at fault, blameable, to blame, illaudable, delinquent. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) innocent, blameless, commendable.
confessing: (*v*) confess.
freaks: (*n*) caprices, facetiousness, humor.
hers: (*pron*) she, his; (*adj*) own.
registry: (*n*) register, record, entry, enrolment, cadaster, cadastre, nationality, schedule, recording, booking; (*v*) enrollment.
spoiling: (*n*) spoilage, spoilation, despoliation, deterioration, detriment, erosion, indulgence, injury; (*v*) withering; (*adj*) easy, lenient.
subterfuge: (*adj, n*) quibble; (*n*) excuse, pretense, deception, ruse, dodge, evasion, pretext, blind, artifice; (*n, v*) shift.
trimmings: (*n*) embellishments, trappings, finery, fixing, superfluities, plumage, edge, paraphernalia, gear, additions, fixings.
unturned: (*v*) undeviating; (*adj*) not turned, unswerving, undistorted.

things would **turn** out, and that--is there any other **reason** wanted?--well, then, that the **father** would be much happier **without owning** the child.

Thesaurus

father: (*n*) dad, begetter, creator, abba, patriarch, beginner, founder, padre; (*n, v*) sire; (*v*) engender, generate. ANTONYMS: (*n*) disciple, follower.
owning: (*n*) admission, avowal, confession, courteous recognition, acknowledgment.
reason: (*n*) account, intellect, occasion, object, understanding, argument, purpose; (*n, v*) cause; (*v*) argue, debate; (*adj, n*) rationality. ANTONYMS: (*n*) inconsistency, disincentive.
things: (*n*) gear, belongings, equipment, garb, garment, clothes, paraphernalia, goods, life, property, palliament.
turn: (*n, v*) curve, roll, twist, go, coil, round, change, bent, spin; (*n*) bout; (*v*) revolve. ANTONYMS: (*n*) failure, Miss, stagnation; (*v*) unbend.
without: (*adv, n, prep*) outside; (*adj, adv*) except; (*adj*) lacking, save barring; (*prep*) out of, sans; (*n*) minus, provisionally; (*adv*) save, beyond; (*adv, prep*) besides. ANTONYMS: (*prep*) with, having; (*adv*) inside.

CHAPTER XIV

There was a pauper's burial that week in Raveloe, and up Kench Yard at Batherley it was known that the dark-haired woman with the fair child, who had lately come to lodge there, was gone away again. That was all the express note taken that Molly had disappeared from the eyes of men. But the unwept death which, to the general lot, seemed as trivial as the summer-shed leaf, was charged with the force of destiny to certain human lives that we know of, shaping their joys and sorrows even to the end.

Silas Marner's determination to keep the "tramp's child" was matter of hardly less surprise and **iterated** talk in the village than the robbery of his money. That **softening** of feeling towards him which dated from his misfortune, that **merging** of suspicion and dislike in a rather **contemptuous** pity for him as lone and crazy, was now accompanied with a more active sympathy, especially amongst the women. Notable mothers, who knew what it was to keep children "whole and sweet"; lazy mothers, who knew what it was to be interrupted in **folding** their arms and scratching their elbows by the **mischievous** propensities of children just firm on their legs, were equally interested in conjecturing how a lone man would manage with a two-year-old child on his hands, and were equally ready with their suggestions: the notable chiefly telling him what he had better do, and the lazy ones being **emphatic** in telling him what he would never be able to do.

Thesaurus

contemptuous: (*adj*) scornful, disdainful, insulting, arrogant, proud, haughty, derisive, cynical, sarcastic, disrespectful; (*adj, v*) supercilious. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) approving, complimentary, deferential, humble, polite, respected, admiring.
emphatic: (*adj*) decided, categorical, expressive, forceful, pronounced, assertive, loud, important, emphatical, insistent; (*adj, v*) absolute. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) insignificant, unassertive, understated, unemphatic, halfhearted.
folding: (*n*) foldaway, plication, foldable, bend, crease, bending, flexure, pleating, collapsable, collapsible, doubling.
iterated: (*adj*) frequent.
merging: (*n*) confluence, concourse, merger, meeting, conflux, unification, coming together, amalgamation, merge, integration; (*adj*) blending. ANTONYM: (*n*) segregation.
mischievous: (*adj*) bad, injurious, detrimental, naughty, deleterious, impish, harmful, playful, maleficent, arch; (*adj, v*) hurtful. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) harmless, serious.
softening: (*adj*) emollient, salving, relaxing; (*v*) soften; (*adj, n*) soothing; (*n*) maceration, mitigation, easement, mollification, inteneration, encouragement.

Among the notable mothers, Dolly Winthrop was the one whose neighbourly **offices** were the most acceptable to Marner, for they were rendered without any show of bustling instruction. Silas had shown her the half-guinea given to him by Godfrey, and had asked her what he should do about getting some clothes for the child.

"Eh, Master Marner," said Dolly, "there's no call to buy, no more nor a pair o' shoes; for I've got the little petticoats as Aaron wore five years ago, and it's ill spending the money on them baby-clothes, for the child 'ull grow like grass i' May, bless it-- that it will."

And the same day Dolly brought her bundle, and displayed to Marner, one by one, the tiny garments in their due order of succession, most of them **patched** and **darned**, but clean and neat as fresh-sprung herbs. This was the introduction to a great ceremony with soap and water, from which Baby came out in new beauty, and sat on Dolly's knee, handling her toes and chuckling and patting her palms together with an air of having made several discoveries about herself, which she communicated by **alternate** sounds of "gug-gug-gug", and "mammy". The "mammy" was not a cry of need or uneasiness: Baby had been used to utter it without expecting either tender sound or touch to follow.

"Anybody 'ud think the angils in heaven couldn't be prettier," said Dolly, **rubbing** the golden curls and kissing them. "And to think of its being covered wi' them dirty rags--and the poor mother--froze to death; but there's Them as took care of it, and brought it to your door, Master Marner. The door was open, and it walked in over the snow, like as if it had been a little **starved** robin. Didn't you say the door was open?"

"Yes," said Silas, meditatively. "Yes--the door was open. The money's gone I don't know where, and this is come from I don't know where."

He had not mentioned to any one his **unconsciousness** of the child's entrance, **shrinking** from questions which might lead to the fact he himself suspected--namely, that he had been in one of his trances.

Thesaurus

alternate: (*adj, n, v*) substitute; (*n*) surrogate, standby, vice; (*v*) reciprocate, vary, take turns, fluctuate, change; (*adj, n*) alternative; (*adj*) secondary. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) consecutive, successive, required, opposite, necessary, essential; (*v*) remain, continue.

darned: (*adj*) blasted, deuced, damn, cursed, goddamned, aeonian, goddamn, irritating, infernal, ageless, annoying.

offices: (*n*) kitchen, pantry, scullery.

patched: (*adj*) mean, besmirched, old, damaged, ragged, flyblown.

rubbing: (*n*) friction, abrasion, grinding, detrition, rub, grip, resistance, chafe, sweat, travail, massage. ANTONYM: (*n*) smoothness.

shrinking: (*n*) contraction, recoil, reduction, decrease, condensation; (*n, v*) lessening; (*adj*) timid, fearful, shy, bashful; (*adj, adv*) cowardly. ANTONYM: (*adj*) confident.

starved: (*adj*) famished, starving, ravenous, meager, emaciated, malnourished, thin, esurient, hungerly, lean, starveling. ANTONYM: (*adj*) healthy.

unconsciousness: (*n*) blackout, insensibility, grogginess, loss of consciousness, coma, trance, stupefaction, faint, unawareness, ignorance, torpor. ANTONYM: (*n*) awareness.

"Ah," said Dolly, with soothing gravity, "it's like the night and the morning, and the sleeping and the waking, and the rain and the harvest--one goes and the other comes, and we know nothing how nor where. We may strive and scrat and fend, but it's little we can do arter all--the big things come and go wi' no **striving** o' our'n-- they do, that they do; and I think you're in the right on it to keep the little un, Master Marner, seeing as it's been sent to you, though there's folks as thinks different. You'll happen be a bit moithered with it while it's so little; but I'll come, and welcome, and see to it for you: I've a bit o' time to spare most days, for when one gets up **betimes** i' the morning, the clock seems to stan' still tow'rt ten, afore it's time to go about the victual. So, as I say, I'll come and see to the child for you, and welcome."

"Thank you... kindly," said Silas, hesitating a little. "I'll be glad if you'll tell me things. But," he added, uneasily, leaning forward to look at Baby with some jealousy, as she was resting her head backward against Dolly's arm, and eyeing him **contentedly** from a distance--"But I want to do things for it myself, else it may get fond o' somebody else, and not fond o' me. I've been used to fending for myself in the house--I can learn, I can learn."

"Eh, to be sure," said Dolly, gently. "I've seen men as are wonderful handy wi' children. The men are awk'ard and contrairy mostly, God help 'em--but when the drink's out of 'em, they aren't **unsensible**, though they're bad for leeching and bandaging--so fiery and unpatient. You see this goes first, next the skin," **proceeded** Dolly, taking up the little shirt, and putting it on.

"Yes," said Marner, **docilely**, bringing his eyes very close, that they might be initiated in the mysteries; **whereupon** Baby seized his head with both her small arms, and put her lips against his face with **purring** noises.

"See there," said Dolly, with a woman's tender **tact**, "she's fondest o' you. She wants to go o' your lap, I'll be bound. Go, then: take her, Master Marner; you can put the things on, and then you can say as you've done for her from the first of her coming to you."

Marner took her on his lap, trembling with an emotion mysterious to himself, at something unknown **dawning** on his life. Thought and feeling were so

Thesaurus

betimes: (*adv*) early, soon, anon, rath, betime, ahead of time, rathe.
contentedly: (*adv*) gladly, satisfiedly, contently, gratifiedly, pleasedly, cheerfully, joyfully, smugly, easily, complacently, placidly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) crossly, awkwardly, unhappily, discontentedly, sadly.
dawning: (*n*) daybreak, sunrise, start, beginning, aurora, cockcrow, dayspring, morning, birth, first light, break of day. ANTONYM: (*n*) sunset.
docilely: (*adv*) obediently, tamely, mildly, submissively, pliantly, compliantly, yieldingly, softly, gentlely, dutifully, willingly.
proceeded: (*v*) proceed, yode.
purring: (*adj*) whining, humming; (*n*) drone.
striving: (*n*) nisus, pains, endeavor, strife, try, strain, attempt, strive, ambition, struggle, exertion. ANTONYM: (*adj*) unmotivated.
tact: (*n*) diplomacy, delicacy, finesse, address, discretion, skill, consideration, refinement, grace, thoughtfulness, tactfulness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) frankness, carelessness, thoughtlessness, insensitivity, clumsiness.
unsensible: (*adj*) inadvisable, unreasonable.
whereupon: (*adv*) thereupon, hereupon, upon which, at what, at which.

confused within him, that if he had tried to give them utterance, he could only have said that the child was come instead of the gold--that the gold had turned into the child. He took the **garments** from Dolly, and put them on under her teaching; interrupted, of course, by Baby's gymnastics.

"There, then! why, you take to it quite easy, Master Marner," said Dolly; "but what shall you do when you're forced to sit in your loom? For she'll get busier and mischievouser every day--she will, bless her. It's lucky as you've got that high hearth i'stead of a **grate**, for that keeps the fire more out of her reach: but if you've got anything as can be spilt or broke, or as is fit to cut her fingers off, she'll be at it--and it is but right you should know."

Silas meditated a little while in some **perplexity**. "I'll tie her to the leg o' the loom," he said at last--"tie her with a good long strip o' something."

"Well, mayhap that'll do, as it's a little gell, for they're easier persuaded to sit i' one place nor the lads. I know what the lads are; for I've had four--four I've had, God knows--and if you was to take and tie 'em up, they'd make a fighting and a crying as if you was ringing the pigs. But I'll bring you my little chair, and some **bits** o' red rag and things for her to play wi'; an' she'll sit and **chatter** to 'em as if they was alive. Eh, if it wasn't a sin to the lads to wish 'em made different, bless 'em, I should ha' been glad for one of 'em to be a little gell; and to think as I could ha' taught her to **scour**, and **mend**, and the knitting, and everything. But I can teach 'em this little un, Master Marner, when she gets old enough."

"But she'll be *my* little un," said Marner, rather hastily. "She'll be nobody else's."

"No, to be sure; you'll have a right to her, if you're a father to her, and bring her up according. But," added Dolly, coming to a point which she had determined **beforehand** to touch upon, "you must bring her up like christened folks's children, and take her to church, and let her learn her **catechise**, as my little Aaron can say off--the "I believe", and everything, and "hurt nobody by word or deed",--as well as if he was the clerk. That's what you must do, Master Marner, if you'd do the right thing by the orphin child."

Thesaurus

beforehand: (*adv*) previously, ahead, in advance, in anticipation, first; (*adj, adv*) early, aforehand; (*adj*) advance, already, afore; (*n*) prior. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) afterwards, afterward, later, late, subsequently.
bits: (*n*) odds and ends, scraps, debris.
catechise: (*v*) catechize, learn, teach, instruct, examine, question, ask.
chatter: (*n, v*) babble, gossip, prattle, gab, cackle, natter; (*adj, n, v*) jabber; (*adj, v*) prate, palaver; (*v*) blabber, patter. ANTONYM: (*v*) drawl.
garments: (*n*) attire, clothing, dress, apparel, raiment, outfit, costume, garb, array, gear, anything worthless.
grate: (*v*) grind, creak, scrape, abrade, gall, gnash, fret, rub, aggravate, provoke; (*n*) lattice.
mend: (*adj, v*) improve; (*v*) correct, cure, heal, doctor, better, amend, restore, convalesce; (*n, v*) fix, patch. ANTONYMS: (*v*) worsen, tear, smash, decline, deteriorate; (*n*) fracture.
perplexity: (*n*) confusion, dilemma, bewilderment, maze, labyrinth, embarrassment, quandary, complication, enigma; (*adj, n*) difficulty, distress. ANTONYM: (*n*) understanding.
scour: (*v*) scrub, ransack, burnish, abrade, furbish, polish, search, cleanse, graze, buff; (*adj, v*) flush. ANTONYM: (*v*) dirty.

Marner's pale face flushed suddenly under a new anxiety. His mind was too busy trying to give some definite bearing to Dolly's words for him to think of answering her.

"And it's my belief," she went on, "as the poor little creatur has never been christened, and it's nothing but right as the parson should be spoke to; and if you was **noways** unwilling, I'd talk to Mr. Macey about it this very day. For if the child ever went anyways wrong, and you hadn't done your part by it, Master Marner-- 'noculation, and everything to save it from harm--it 'ud be a **thorn** i' your bed for ever o' this side the grave; and I can't think as it 'ud be easy lying down for anybody when they'd got to another world, if they hadn't done their part by the helpless children as come wi'out their own asking."

Dolly herself was **disposed** to be silent for some time now, for she had spoken from the depths of her own simple belief, and was much concerned to know whether her words would produce the desired effect on Silas. He was puzzled and anxious, for Dolly's word "christened" **conveyed** no distinct meaning to him. He had only heard of **baptism**, and had only seen the baptism of **grown**-up men and women.

"What is it as you mean by "christened"?" he said at last, **timidly**. "Won't folks be good to her without it?"

"Dear, dear! Master Marner," said Dolly, with gentle distress and compassion. "Had you never no father nor mother as taught you to say your prayers, and as there's good words and good things to keep us from harm?"

"Yes," said Silas, in a low voice; "I know a deal about that-- used to, used to. But your ways are different: my country was a good way off." He paused a few moments, and then added, more **decidedly**, "But I want to do everything as can be done for the child. And whatever's right for it i' this country, and you think 'ull do it good, I'll act according, if you'll tell me."

"Well, then, Master Marner," said Dolly, **inwardly** rejoiced, "I'll ask Mr. Macey to speak to the parson about it; and you must fix on a name for it, because it must have a name giv' it when it's christened."

Thesaurus

baptism: (*n*) affusion, aspersion, chrism, sacrament, immersion, designation, entrance, introduction, initiation, blessing; (*v*) baptize.
conveyed: (*v*) borne, sent.
decidedly: (*adv*) clearly, positively, definitely, absolutely, emphatically, decisively, resolutely, firmly, markedly, surely, determinedly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) uncertainly, equivocally, slightly, vaguely.
disposed: (*adj*) prone, apt, ready, subject, prepared, liable, game, inclined, fain, likely, minded. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) ailing, indisposed, unlikely, disinclined, reluctant, impervious.
grown-up: (*adj*) mature, big, full-grown, ripe, grown, full-fledged.
inwardly: (*adv*) inside, interiorly, innerly, within, secretly, intrinsically, intimately, privately, spiritually, incomingly; (*adj*) inwards. ANTONYM: (*adv*) openly.
noways: (*n*) nowise.
thorn: (*n*) barb, prickle, bramble, spike, point, brier, pricker, needle, sticker, fang; (*adj, n*) sting.
timidly: (*adv*) fearfully, timorously, cautiously, shyly, diffidently, anxiously, nervously, shily, gingerly, modestly, apprehensively. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) confidently, bravely, daringly, brashly, fearlessly, decisively, brazenly.

"My mother's name was Hephzibah," said Silas, "and my little sister was named after her."

"Eh, that's a hard name," said Dolly. "I partly think it isn't a christened name."

"It's a Bible name," said Silas, old ideas recurring.

"Then I've no call to speak again' it," said Dolly, rather startled by Silas's knowledge on this head; "but you see I'm no scholard, and I'm slow at catching the words. My husband says I'm allays like as if I was putting the **haft** for the handle--that's what he says--for he's very sharp, God help him. But it was awk'ard calling your little sister by such a hard name, when you'd got nothing big to say, like--wasn't it, Master Marner?"

"We called her Eppie," said Silas.

"Well, if it was noways wrong to **shorten** the name, it 'ud be a deal handier. And so I'll go now, Master Marner, and I'll speak about the christening afore dark; and I wish you the best o' **luck**, and it's my belief as it'll come to you, if you do what's right by the orphin child;--and there's the 'noculation to be seen to; and as to washing its bits o' things, you need look to nobody but me, for I can do 'em wi' one hand when I've got my **suds** about. Eh, the blessed angil! You'll let me bring my Aaron one o' these days, and he'll show her his little **cart** as his father's made for him, and the black-and-white pup as he's got a-rearing."

Baby *was* christened, the rector deciding that a double baptism was the lesser risk to **incur**; and on this occasion Silas, making himself as clean and **tidy** as he could, appeared for the first time within the church, and shared in the observances held sacred by his neighbours. He was quite unable, by means of anything he heard or saw, to identify the Raveloe religion with his old faith; if he could at any time in his previous life have done so, it must have been by the aid of a strong feeling ready to **vibrate** with sympathy, rather than by a comparison of phrases and ideas: and now for long years that feeling had been **dormant**. He had no distinct idea about the baptism and the church-going, except that Dolly had said it was for the good of the child; and in this way, as the weeks grew to

Thesaurus

cart: (*n*) car, carriage, handcart, barrow, applecart, wagon; (*v*) haul, drag, bear, take, transfer.
dormant: (*adj*) inactive, torpid, inert, smoldering, suspended, inoperative, potential, sluggish, quiescent, latent, quiet. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) overt, extinct, dynamic, alive, awake.
haft: (*n*) heft, knob, helve, grip, hilt, holder, stem, tiller, treadle, trigger, key.
incur: (*n, v*) contract; (*v*) catch, get, incite, begin, cause, encounter, experience, obtain, suffer, receive.
luck: (*n*) fortune, fate, accident, destiny, hazard, lot, advantage, providence, portion, happiness; (*n, v*) chance. ANTONYM: (*n*) design.
shorten: (*v*) condense, reduce, abbreviate, clip, abridge, cut, curtail, cut back, contract, compress, dock. ANTONYMS: (*v*) expand, prolong, extend, complicate.
suds: (*n, v*) foam, froth, spume; (*n*) lather, soapsuds, bubbles, head, beer, bubble, lager, surf.
tidy: (*adj, v*) clean, trim; (*adj*) spruce, shipshape, respectable, natty; (*v*) clear, straighten, clear up, clean up, arrange. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) knotted, disheveled, disorganized, messy, slovenly, hairy, unsubstantial, dense; (*v*) litter, disorganize, disorder.
vibrate: (*v*) shake, shiver, oscillate, tremble, quiver, shudder, swing, wobble, palpitate, thrill, throb.

months, the child created fresh and fresh links between his life and the lives from which he had hitherto shrunk continually into narrower isolation. Unlike the gold which needed nothing, and must be **worshipped** in close-locked solitude--which was hidden away from the daylight, was deaf to the song of birds, and started to no human tones--Eppie was a creature of endless claims and ever-growing desires, seeking and loving sunshine, and living sounds, and living movements; making trial of everything, with trust in new joy, and stirring the human kindness in all eyes that looked on her. The gold had kept his thoughts in an ever-repeated circle, leading to nothing beyond itself; but Eppie was an object **compacted** of changes and hopes that forced his thoughts onward, and carried them far away from their old eager **pacing** towards the same blank limit--carried them away to the new things that would come with the coming years, when Eppie would have learned to understand how her father Silas cared for her; and made him look for images of that time in the ties and charities that bound together the families of his neighbours. The gold had asked that he should sit weaving longer and longer, **deafened** and **blinded** more and more to all things except the **monotony** of his loom and the repetition of his web; but Eppie called him away from his weaving, and made him think all its pauses a holiday, **reawakening** his senses with her fresh life, even to the old winter-flies that came crawling forth in the early spring sunshine, and warming him into joy because *she* had joy.

And when the sunshine grew strong and lasting, so that the buttercups were thick in the meadows, Silas might be seen in the sunny midday, or in the late afternoon when the shadows were **lengthening** under the hedgerows, strolling out with uncovered head to carry Eppie beyond the Stone-pits to where the flowers grew, till they reached some favourite bank where he could sit down, while Eppie toddled to pluck the flowers, and make remarks to the **winged** things that murmured happily above the bright petals, calling "Dad-dad's" attention continually by bringing him the flowers. Then she would turn her ear to some sudden bird-note, and Silas learned to please her by making signs of hushed stillness, that they might listen for the note to come again: so that when it came, she set up her small back and laughed with gurgling triumph. Sitting on

Thesaurus

blinded: (*adj*) blindfolded, blinder, blindly, reckless, unsighted, blindfold, dizzy.
compacted: (*adj*) solid, packed together, hard, packed down, trampled, massive, summary, flattened, trodden, packed in, crushed.
deafened: (*adj*) dead, deaf corn, stunned, deadened.
lengthening: (*n*) extension, protraction, prolongation, continuation, expansion, increasing, enlargement, perpetuation, amplification, production, continuance. ANTONYM: (*n*) contraction.
monotony: (*n*) boredom, dullness, evenness, sameness, tediousness, flatness, dreariness, tautophony, tiresomeness; (*adj*) dull work, humdrum. ANTONYMS: (*n*) variety, variation.
pacing: (*n*) accelerando, andante, allegro, allegretto, pace, walk, tempo, musical time, maneuvering alongside another vessel, cardiac pacing.
reawakening: (*n*) regeneration, rebirth, recovery, resurgence, revitalization, reawakening of a volcano, new start, new beginning.
winged: (*adj*) swift, rapid, speedy, quick, flying, alate, sublime, lofty, alated, aligerous, composed.
worshipped: (*adj*) adored, idolized, venerable.

the banks in this way, Silas began to look for the once familiar herbs again; and as the leaves, with their unchanged outline and markings, lay on his palm, there was a sense of **crowding remembrances** from which he turned away timidly, taking refuge in Eppie's little world, that lay lightly on his **enfeebled** spirit.

As the child's mind was growing into knowledge, his mind was growing into memory: as her life unfolded, his soul, long **stupefied** in a cold narrow prison, was unfolding too, and trembling gradually into full consciousness.

It was an influence which must gather force with every new year: the tones that stirred Silas's heart grew articulate, and called for more distinct answers; shapes and sounds grew clearer for Eppie's eyes and ears, and there was more that "Dad-dad" was **imperatively** required to notice and account for. Also, by the time Eppie was three years old, she developed a fine capacity for mischief, and for devising ingenious ways of being troublesome, which found much exercise, not only for Silas's patience, but for his **watchfulness** and penetration. Sorely was poor Silas puzzled on such occasions by the incompatible demands of love. Dolly Winthrop told him that punishment was good for Eppie, and that, as for rearing a child without making it tingle a little in soft and safe places now and then, it was not to be done.

"To be sure, there's another thing you might do, Master Marner," added Dolly, meditatively: "you might shut her up once i' the coal-hole. That was what I did wi' Aaron; for I was that silly wi' the youngest lad, as I could never bear to smack him. Not as I could find i' my heart to let him stay i' the coal-hole more nor a minute, but it was enough to **colly** him all over, so as he must be new washed and dressed, and it was as good as a rod to him--that was. But I put it upo' your conscience, Master Marner, as there's one of 'em you must choose--ayther **smacking** or the coal-hole-- else she'll get so **masterful**, there'll be no holding her."

Silas was impressed with the melancholy truth of this last remark; but his force of mind failed before the only two penal methods open to him, not only because it was painful to him to hurt Eppie, but because he trembled at a moment's contention with her, lest she should love him the less for it. Let even

Thesaurus

colly: (*v*) begrime, bemire, blemish, muddy, mire, splash, soil, polluting, spot, pollute, spotted.
crowding: (*n*) plough crowding, bunch, jostlement, overcrowding.
enfeebled: (*adj*) infirm, enervated, feeble, decrepit, crippled, old, adynamic; (*adj, v*) sickly, vacillating; (*v*) weak, accessible.
imperatively: (*adv*) commandingly, imperiously, urgently, pressingly, authoritatively, obligatorily, essentially, magisterially, necessarily, instantly, critically.
masterful: (*adj*) consummate, imperious, dictatorial, overbearing, masterly, Masterful beggar, skillful, proficient, adept, perfect, expert. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) incompetent, meek, inept.
remembrances: (*adj*) abord, devoir, respects, welcome; (*n*) remembrance.
smacking: (*n*) smack, brisk, shit, scag, savor, beating, h, savour, diacetylmorphine, heroin, horse.
stupefied: (*adj*) stunned, amazed, astonished, bewildered, astounded, dumbfounded, stupid, confused, flabbergasted, dumfounded, groggy. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) precise, unimpressed.
watchfulness: (*n*) care, caution, alertness, heed, wariness, jealousy, attentiveness, attention, solicitude, concern, anxiety. ANTONYMS: (*n*) recklessness, inattentiveness.

an affectionate Goliath get himself tied to a small tender thing, **dreading** to hurt it by pulling, and dreading still more to snap the cord, and which of the two, pray, will be master? It was clear that Eppie, with her short toddling steps, must lead father Silas a pretty dance on any fine morning when circumstances favoured mischief.

For example. He had wisely chosen a broad strip of linen as a means of **fastening** her to his loom when he was busy: it made a broad belt round her waist, and was long enough to allow of her reaching the truckle-bed and sitting down on it, but not long enough for her to attempt any dangerous climbing. One bright summer's morning Silas had been more **engrossed** than usual in "setting up" a new piece of work, an occasion on which his scissors were in requisition. These scissors, **owing** to an **especial** warning of Dolly's, had been kept carefully out of Eppie's reach; but the click of them had had a peculiar attraction for her ear, and watching the results of that click, she had derived the **philosophic** lesson that the same cause would produce the same effect. Silas had seated himself in his loom, and the noise of weaving had begun; but he had left his scissors on a ledge which Eppie's arm was long enough to reach; and now, like a small mouse, watching her opportunity, she stole quietly from her corner, secured the scissors, and toddled to the bed again, setting up her back as a mode of concealing the fact. She had a distinct intention as to the use of the scissors; and having cut the linen strip in a jagged but **effectual** manner, in two moments she had run out at the open door where the sunshine was inviting her, while poor Silas believed her to be a better child than usual. It was not until he happened to need his scissors that the terrible fact burst upon him: Eppie had run out by herself--had perhaps fallen into the Stone-pit. Silas, shaken by the worst fear that could have befallen him, rushed out, calling "Eppie!" and ran eagerly about the unenclosed space, exploring the dry cavities into which she might have fallen, and then gazing with questioning dread at the smooth red surface of the water. The cold drops stood on his brow. How long had she been out? There was one hope--that she had crept through the stile and got into the fields, where he habitually took her to stroll. But the grass was high in the meadow, and there was no descrying her, if she were there, except by a close

Thesaurus

dreading: (*adj*) anxious.
effectual: (*adj, n*) efficient, efficacious, able; (*adj*) forceful, telling, authoritative, operative, potent, adequate, impressive, powerful. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) ineffectual, incapable, weak, impotent, ineffective, unproductive, unsuccessful, useless.
engrossed: (*adj*) rapt, engaged, intent, occupied, preoccupied, busy, fascinated, obsessed, thoughtful, hooked; (*adj, v*) immersed. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) disinterested, bored, distracted, indifferent, unconcerned, uninterested, inattentive, carefree.
especial: (*adj*) extraordinary, special, specific, chief, individual, distinct, distinctive, characteristic, appropriate, peculiar, express. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) general, normal, common, unexceptional, usual.
fastening: (*n*) clasp, clip, buckle, attachment, lock, catch, link, bonding; (*n, v*) bond; (*v*) tie, bind.
owing: (*adj*) due, unpaid, unsettled, outstanding, overdue, owed, payable, undischarged, indebted, fulfilling obligation, lawful. ANTONYM: (*adj*) settled.
philosophic: (*v*) platonic, staid, stayed, stoical; (*adj*) thoughtful, rational, patient, learned, ideologic, ideological. ANTONYM: (*adj*) nonphilosophical.

search that would be a trespass on Mr. Osgood's crop. Still, that **misdemeanour** must be committed; and poor Silas, after peering all round the hedgerows, traversed the grass, beginning with **perturbed** vision to see Eppie behind every group of red **sorrel**, and to see her moving always farther off as he approached. The meadow was searched in vain; and he got over the stile into the next field, looking with dying hope towards a small pond which was now reduced to its summer **shallowness**, so as to leave a wide margin of good adhesive mud. Here, however, sat Eppie, discoursing cheerfully to her own small boot, which she was using as a bucket to convey the water into a deep hoof-mark, while her little naked foot was planted comfortably on a cushion of olive-green mud. A red-headed calf was observing her with alarmed doubt through the opposite hedge.

Here was clearly a case of **aberration** in a christened child which demanded severe treatment; but Silas, overcome with **convulsive** joy at finding his treasure again, could do nothing but snatch her up, and cover her with half-sobbing kisses. It was not until he had carried her home, and had begun to think of the necessary washing, that he recollected the need that he should punish Eppie, and "make her remember". The idea that she might run away again and come to harm, gave him unusual resolution, and for the first time he determined to try the coal-hole--a small **closet** near the hearth.

"Naughty, naughty Eppie," he suddenly began, holding her on his knee, and pointing to her muddy feet and clothes--"naughty to cut with the scissors and run away. Eppie must go into the coal-hole for being naughty. Daddy must put her in the coal-hole."

He half-expected that this would be shock enough, and that Eppie would begin to cry. But instead of that, she began to shake herself on his knee, as if the proposition opened a pleasing novelty. Seeing that he must proceed to extremities, he put her into the coal-hole, and held the door closed, with a trembling sense that he was using a strong measure. For a moment there was silence, but then came a little cry, "Opy, opy!" and Silas let her out again, saying, "Now Eppie 'ull never be naughty again, else she must go in the coal-hole--a black naughty place."

Thesaurus

aberration: (*n*) insanity, aberrancy, frenzy, deviation, mistake, aberrance, oddity, distortion; (*n, v*) diversion; (*adj, n*) mania, derangement. ANTONYMS: (*n*) regularity, average, conformity, mean, sameness, norm, normality.

closet: (*n*) cupboard, cubicle, cell, latrine, bathroom, wardrobe, water closet; (*adj*) clandestine, confidential, secret, private. ANTONYM: (*adj*) open.

convulsive: (*adj*) spastic, galvanic, fitful, paroxysmal, violent, choreic, unsteady, hysterical; (*v*) unquiet, restless, saltatory.

misdemeanour: (*n*) infringement, infraction, misdemeanor, delinquency, felony, offense, offence, violation, crime, misconduct, malpractice.

perturbed: (*adj*) disturbed, agitated, hot and bothered, confused, uneasy, concerned, worried, unsettled, troubled, upset, distraught. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) untroubled, relaxed.

shallowness: (*n*) frivolity, glibness, ignorance, trivia, triviality, commonplace, depth, shoaliness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) profundity, substance.

sorrel: (*n*) russet buff, shamrock, carroty, goatsfoot, oxalis, murrey, common sorrel, brown, pier, red sorrel, reddish brown.

The weaving must stand still a long while this morning, for now Eppie must be washed, and have clean clothes on; but it was to be hoped that this punishment would have a lasting effect, and save time in future--though, perhaps, it would have been better if Eppie had cried more.

In half an hour she was clean again, and Silas having turned his back to see what he could do with the linen band, threw it down again, with the reflection that Eppie would be good without fastening for the rest of the morning. He turned round again, and was going to place her in her little chair near the loom, when she peeped out at him with black face and hands again, and said, "Eppie in de toal-hole!"

This total failure of the coal-hole discipline shook Silas's belief in the **efficacy** of punishment. "She'd take it all for fun," he observed to Dolly, "if I didn't hurt her, and that I can't do, Mrs. Winthrop. If she makes me a bit o' trouble, I can bear it. And she's got no tricks but what she'll grow out of."

"Well, that's partly true, Master Marner," said Dolly, **sympathetically**; "and if you can't bring your mind to **frighten** her off touching things, you must do what you can to keep 'em out of her way. That's what I do wi' the pups as the lads are allays a-rearing. They *will* worry and **gnaw**--worry and gnaw they will, if it was one's Sunday cap as hung anywhere so as they could drag it. They know no difference, God help 'em: it's the pushing o' the teeth as sets 'em on, that's what it is."

So Eppie was reared without punishment, the burden of her misdeeds being borne **vicariously** by father Silas. The stone hut was made a soft nest for her, lined with **downy** patience: and also in the world that lay beyond the stone hut she knew nothing of frowns and denials.

Notwithstanding the difficulty of carrying her and his yarn or linen at the same time, Silas took her with him in most of his journeys to the farmhouses, unwilling to leave her behind at Dolly Winthrop's, who was always ready to take care of her; and little curly-headed Eppie, the weaver's child, became an object of interest at several outlying homesteads, as well as in the village. Hitherto he had been treated very much as if he had been a useful **gnome** or brownie-- a queer

Thesaurus

downy: (*adj*) flossy, fuzzy, soft, hairy, fleecy, silken, nappy, furry, downlike; (*v*) flocculent, flaccid. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) coarse, hard.
efficacy: (*n*) effect, potency, effectiveness, capability, force, efficiency, efficaciousness, utility, vigor, strength, usefulness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) inefficiency, ineffectiveness, uselessness.
frighten: (*v*) cow, alarm, daunt, terrify, appall, scare, affright, intimidate, terrorize, appal; (*n, v*) fright. ANTONYMS: (*v*) comfort, reassure, soothe, calm.
gnaw: (*v*) chew, fret, crunch, corrode, nibble, eat, erode, to bite, munch, masticate; (*n, v*) chafe.
gnome: (*n*) dwarf, goblin, imp, axiom, sprite, lamia, jinn, elf, brownie, byword, pixie.
notwithstanding: (*adv, conj*) nevertheless, although, even though, yet, but; (*conj*) albeit; (*adv*) nonetheless, though, still, all the same; (*prep*) despite.
sympathetically: (*adv*) compassionately, tenderly, considerately, agreeably, favorably, sensitively, caringly, benevolently, thoughtfully, mercifully, humanely. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) meanly, thoughtlessly, unfeelingly, severely, unkindly, roughly, negatively, disapprovingly, cruelly, tactlessly.
vicariously: (*adv*) representatively.

and **unaccountable** creature, who must necessarily be looked at with wondering curiosity and repulsion, and with whom one would be glad to make all greetings and bargains as brief as possible, but who must be dealt with in a **propitiatory** way, and occasionally have a present of pork or garden stuff to carry home with him, seeing that without him there was no getting the yarn woven. But now Silas met with open smiling faces and cheerful questioning, as a person whose satisfactions and difficulties could be understood. Everywhere he must sit a little and talk about the child, and words of interest were always ready for him: "Ah, Master Marner, you'll be lucky if she takes the **measles** soon and easy!"-- or, "Why, there isn't many lone men 'ud ha' been wishing to take up with a little un like that: but I reckon the weaving makes you handier than men as do out-door work--you're partly as handy as a woman, for weaving comes next to spinning." Elderly masters and mistresses, seated **observantly** in large kitchen arm-chairs, shook their heads over the difficulties **attendant** on **rearing** children, felt Eppie's round arms and legs, and pronounced them remarkably firm, and told Silas that, if she turned out well (which, however, there was no telling), it would be a fine thing for him to have a steady lass to do for him when he got helpless. Servant maidens were fond of carrying her out to look at the hens and **chickens**, or to see if any cherries could be shaken down in the **orchard**; and the small boys and girls approached her slowly, with cautious movement and steady gaze, like little dogs face to face with one of their own kind, till attraction had reached the point at which the soft lips were put out for a kiss. No child was afraid of approaching Silas when Eppie was near him: there was no repulsion around him now, either for young or old; for the little child had come to link him once more with the whole world. There was love between him and the child that blent them into one, and there was love between the child and the world--from men and women with parental looks and tones, to the red lady-birds and the round pebbles.

Silas began now to think of Raveloe life entirely in relation to Eppie: she must have everything that was a good in Raveloe; and he listened docilely, that he might come to understand better what this life was, from which, for fifteen years, he had stood aloof as from a strange thing, with which he could have no communion: as some man who has a precious plant to which he would give a

Thesaurus

attendant: (*n*) companion, follower, assistant, escort, subordinate, employee, guide, varlet; (*adj*) accompanying, concomitant, incidental. ANTONYMS: (*n*) superior, boss; (*adj*) absent, unrelated, significant.

chickens: (*n*) Galliformes, order Galliformes.

measles: (*n*) morbilli, rubeola, rubella, leprosy, contagion, contagious disease; (*adj*) polio, mumps.

observantly: (*adv*) attentively, observingly, vigilantly, alertly, regardfully, cautiously, carefully, mindfully, heedfully, sharply, quickly.

orchard: (*n*) park, garden, plantation, arboretum, avenue, pinetum, shrubbery, woodlet, parterre, pinery, copse.

propitiatory: (*adj*) conciliatory, conciliative, expiative, propitiative, apologetic.

rearing: (*n*) breeding, nurture, education, bringing up, raising, fostering, upbringing, background, fosterage, nursing; (*adj*) rampant.

unaccountable: (*adj*) incomprehensible, inexplicable, strange, unintelligible, unexplainable, mysterious, impenetrable, undiscoverable, undecipherable, unknowable, unnatural. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) accountable, explainable, responsible, explicable.

nurturing home in a new soil, thinks of the rain, and the sunshine, and all influences, in relation to his **nursling**, and asks **industriously** for all knowledge that will help him to satisfy the wants of the searching roots, or to guard leaf and bud from **invading** harm. The **disposition** to hoard had been utterly crushed at the very first by the loss of his long-stored gold: the coins he **earned** afterwards seemed as irrelevant as **stones** brought to complete a house suddenly buried by an **earthquake**; the sense of **bereavement** was too heavy upon him for the old thrill of satisfaction to arise again at the touch of the newly-earned coin. And now something had come to replace his hoard which gave a growing purpose to the earnings, drawing his hope and joy continually **onward** beyond the money.

In old days there were angels who came and took men by the hand and led them away from the city of destruction. We see no white-winged angels now. But yet men are led away from threatening destruction: a hand is put into theirs, which leads them forth gently towards a calm and bright land, so that they look no more backward; and the hand may be a little child's.

Thesaurus

bereavement: (*n*) mourning, loss, sorrow, sadness, privation, deprivation, death, grief, sorrowfulness, decease, demise.
disposition: (*n*) attitude, character, disposal, tendency, predisposition, inclination, propensity, bias, arrangement, direction, aptitude.
earned: (*adj*) deserved, realized, due.
earthquake: (*n*) tremor, shock, quake, temblor, cataclysm, upheaval, seaquake, avalanche; (*adj*) thunderstorm, volcano, seismic.
industriously: (*adv*) diligently, painstakingly, busily, sedulously, tirelessly, untiringly, eagerly, studiously, laboriously, carefully, conscientiously. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) wearily, carelessly.
invading: (*adj*) invade, incursive, attacking, impertinent, abhorrent, abusive, aggressive, assailant, disgusting, disagreeable, distasteful.
nursling: (*n*) baby, babe, infant, suckling, child, sucker, toddler, lactation.
nurturing: (*n*) fostering, upbringing, bringing up, fosterage, development, acculturation; (*adj*) cultural, motherly.
onward: (*adv*) ahead, forwards, before, forth, onwards, along, in advance, frontward, forrader; (*adv, prep*) on; (*adj*) progressive. ANTONYM: (*adv*) backward.
stones: (*n*) shingle, grit.

CHAPTER XV

There was one person, as you will believe, who watched with **keener** though more hidden interest than any other, the prosperous growth of Eppie under the weaver's care. He dared not do anything that would imply a stronger interest in a poor man's adopted child than could be expected from the **kindliness** of the young Squire, when a chance meeting suggested a little present to a simple old fellow whom others noticed with **goodwill**; but he told himself that the time would come when he might do something towards furthering the welfare of his daughter without incurring suspicion. Was he very uneasy in the meantime at his inability to give his daughter her **birthright**? I cannot say that he was. The child was being taken care of, and would very likely be happy, as people in humble stations often were-- happier, perhaps, than those brought up in luxury.

That famous ring that pricked its owner when he forgot duty and followed desire--I wonder if it pricked very hard when he set out on the chase, or whether it pricked but lightly then, and only pierced to the quick when the chase had long been ended, and hope, folding her **wings**, looked **backward** and became regret?

Godfrey Cass's cheek and eye were brighter than ever now. He was so **undivided** in his aims, that he seemed like a man of firmness. No Dunsey had come back: people had made up their minds that he was gone for a soldier, or gone "out of the country", and no one cared to be specific in their **inquiries** on a

Thesaurus

backward: (*adj, adv*) late, behindhand; (*adj*) tardy, retarded, reluctant, coy, slow, laggard, dilatory; (*adv*) behind, backwardly. ANTONYMS: (*adj, adv*) ahead; (*adv*) onward; (*adj*) quick, developing, advanced, confident, brilliant, bold.

birthright: (*n*) patrimony, inheritance, heritage, claim, right of primogeniture, tradition, legacy, demand, due, entitlement, heirloom.

goodwill: (*n*) friendship, friendliness, amity, grace, kindness, benevolence, altruism, readiness, favour, neighborliness, sympathy. ANTONYMS: (*n*) hostility, malice, opposition, malevolence.

inquiries: (*n*) investigation, examination, study, enquiries, enquiry, inquiry, exploration.

keener: (*v*) Indian giver, floater, repeater.

kindliness: (*n*) friendliness, geniality, amiability, grace, benignancy, mercy, tenderness, compassion, charity, consideration, helpfulness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) indifference, reserve, cruelty.

undivided: (*adj*) complete, whole, unbroken, total, single, integral, continuous, united, full, exclusive, solid. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) partial, separate, broken, imperfect, individual.

wings: (*n*) insignia, agency.

subject delicate to a **respectable** family. Godfrey had ceased to see the shadow of Dunsey across his path; and the path now lay straight forward to the **accomplishment** of his best, longest-cherished wishes. Everybody said Mr. Godfrey had taken the right turn; and it was pretty clear what would be the end of things, for there were not many days in the week that he was not seen **riding** to the Warrens. Godfrey himself, when he was asked **jocosely** if the day had been fixed, smiled with the pleasant consciousness of a **lover** who could say "yes", if he liked. He felt a **reformed** man, delivered from **temptation**; and the vision of his future life seemed to him as a promised land for which he had no cause to fight. He saw himself with all his happiness **centred** on his own hearth, while Nancy would smile on him as he played with the children.

And that other child--not on the hearth--he would not forget it; he would see that it was well provided for. That was a father's duty.

Thesaurus

accomplishment: (*n*) attainment, completion, exploit, performance, deed, skill, fulfillment, feat, action, act, acquisition. ANTONYMS: (*n*) abandonment, washout, flop, debacle, defeat.

centred: (*adj*) centralized, concentrated, focused, focussed, centralised; (*n*) carbon, c, hundred, century, one C.

jocosely: (*adv*) waggishly, jokingly, humorously, comically, in jest, facetiously, sportively, playfully, funnily, gaily, jestingly.

lover: (*n*) dear, darling, fan, devotee, beau, buff, love, admirer, beloved, amorist, man.

reformed: (*adj*) improved, corrected, unorthodox, altered.

respectable: (*adj*) considerable, decorous, fair, estimable, decent, honorable, good, proper, creditable, passable, honest. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) bad, small, sordid, scruffy, inadequate, unrespectable, paltry, discourteous, inappropriate, sinful, unacceptable.

riding: (*n*) ride, horseback riding, travel, hundred, tithing, soke, travelling, manege, athletics; (*v*) horsemanship; (*adj*) awheel.

temptation: (*n, v*) lure, enticement, bait; (*n*) attraction, allurement, invitation, seduction, inducement, allure, appeal, pull. ANTONYMS: (*n*) dislike, discouragement.

PART TWO

CHAPTER XVI

It was a bright autumn Sunday, sixteen years after Silas Marner had found his new treasure on the hearth. The bells of the old Raveloe church were ringing the cheerful **peal** which told that the morning service was ended; and out of the **arched** doorway in the tower came slowly, **retarded** by friendly greetings and questions, the richer parishioners who had chosen this bright Sunday morning as eligible for church-going. It was the rural fashion of that time for the more important members of the **congregation** to depart first, while their humbler neighbours waited and looked on, **stroking** their bent heads or dropping their curtsies to any large **ratepayer** who turned to notice them.

Foremost among these advancing groups of well-clad people, there are some whom we shall recognize, in spite of Time, who has laid his hand on them all. The tall **blond** man of forty is not much changed in feature from the Godfrey Cass of six-and-twenty: he is only fuller in flesh, and has only lost the **indefinable** look of youth-- a loss which is marked even when the eye is undulled and the **wrinkles** are not yet come. Perhaps the pretty woman, not much younger than he, who is leaning on his arm, is more changed than her husband: the lovely bloom that used to be always on her cheek now comes but fitfully, with the fresh morning air or with some strong surprise; yet to all who love human faces best for what they tell of human experience, Nancy's beauty has a heightened interest. Often the soul is **ripened** into fuller goodness while

Thesaurus

arched: (*adj, v*) bowed, arcuate; (*adj*) bent, vaulted, convex, arciform, arced, domed, hooked, hunched, crooked.
blond: (*adj, v*) fair; (*adj, n*) blonde; (*adj*) light, flaxen, pale, creamy; (*n*) someone, soul, somebody, person; (*v*) to stick together. ANTONYM: (*adj*) brunet.
congregation: (*n*) assembly, gathering, meeting, collection, fold, flock, crowd, convocation, congregating, company; (*n, v*) assemblage.
indefinable: (*adj*) ineffable, unspeakable, vague, indeterminate, undefinable, inexpressible, elusive, indefinite, undefined, nondescript, equivocal. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) concrete, precise.
peal: (*n*) ding, noise, clang, dingdong, blast; (*v*) chime, knell, toll, echo; (*adj, n*) swell; (*n, v*) bang.
ratepayer: (*n*) taxpayer, payer.
retarded: (*adj*) slow, tardy, imbecile, belated, delayed, simple, obtuse, leisurely, dull, deferred, defective. ANTONYM: (*adj*) precocious.
ripened: (*adj*) mature, matured, elderly, aged, maturer, old, mellow, grown, full-grown, cured, adult. ANTONYM: (*adj*) young.
stroking: (*v*) caress, strike, blow; (*n*) cam stroke, feeling, effleurage, diagonal, CVA, commendation, glide, slash.
wrinkles: (*n*) crow's feet.

age has spread an ugly film, so that mere glances can never divine the **preciousness** of the fruit. But the years have not been so cruel to Nancy. The firm yet placid mouth, the clear **veracious** glance of the brown eyes, speak now of a nature that has been tested and has kept its highest qualities; and even the costume, with its dainty **neatness** and purity, has more significance now the coquetries of youth can have nothing to do with it.

Mr. and Mrs. Godfrey Cass (any higher title has died away from Raveloe lips since the old Squire was gathered to his fathers and his inheritance was divided) have turned round to look for the tall aged man and the plainly dressed woman who are a little behind-- Nancy having observed that they must wait for "father and Priscilla"--and now they all turn into a narrower path leading across the churchyard to a small gate opposite the Red House. We will not follow them now; for may there not be some others in this departing congregation whom we should like to see again--some of those who are not likely to be handsomely clad, and whom we may not recognize so easily as the master and mistress of the Red House?

But it is impossible to mistake Silas Marner. His large brown eyes seem to have gathered a longer vision, as is the way with eyes that have been short-sighted in early life, and they have a less vague, a more answering gaze; but in everything else one sees signs of a frame much enfeebled by the lapse of the sixteen years. The weaver's bent shoulders and white hair give him almost the look of advanced age, though he is not more than five-and-fifty; but there is the freshest blossom of youth close by his side--a blonde **dimpled** girl of eighteen, who has vainly tried to **chastise** her curly **auburn** hair into smoothness under her brown bonnet: the hair ripples as **obstinately** as a **brooklet** under the March breeze, and the little ringlets burst away from the restraining **comb** behind and show themselves below the bonnet-crown. Eppie cannot help being rather vexed about her hair, for there is no other girl in Raveloe who has hair at all like it, and she thinks hair ought to be smooth. She does not like to be blameworthy even in small things: you see how neatly her prayer-book is folded in her spotted handkerchief.

Thesaurus

auburn: (*adj*) bay, russet, reddish, foxy, coloured, dapple, coffee, chocolate, brunette; (*adj, n*) brown, tawny.
brooklet: (*v*) streamlet; (*n*) creek.
chastise: (*v*) castigate, chasten, correct, reprimand, punish, criticize, beat, scold, chew out, flog; (*n, v*) scourge. ANTONYMS: (*v*) comfort, bless, commend, promote, reward, encourage.
comb: (*v*) brush, ransack, search, dress, eliminate, groom; (*adj*) weed; (*n*) crest, combing, caruncle, currycomb.
dimpled: (*adj*) dimply, hollow.
neatness: (*n*) trimness, dexterity, orderliness, tidiness, spruceness, cleanliness, precision, compactness, purity, cleanness, elegance. ANTONYMS: (*n*) untidiness, largeness, clumsiness, disorder, inelegance, clutter, chaos, messiness.
obstinately: (*adv*) obdurately, mulishly, persistently, perversely, doggedly, refractorily, unyieldingly, willfully, pigheadedly, waywardly, firmly. ANTONYM: (*adv*) helpfully.
preciousness: (*n*) invaluableness, value, valuableness, pricelessness, preciosity, costliness, love, glory, fondness.
veracious: (*adj*) truthful, true, reliable, accurate, trustworthy, faithful, veridical, frank, right, just, exact. ANTONYM: (*adj*) untrue.

That **good**-looking young fellow, in a new fustian suit, who walks behind her, is not quite sure upon the question of hair in the **abstract**, when Eppie **puts** it to him, and thinks that perhaps straight hair is the best in general, but he doesn't want Eppie's hair to be different. She surely divines that there is some one behind her who is thinking about her very particularly, and mustering courage to come to her side as soon as they are out in the lane, else why should she look rather shy, and take care not to turn away her head from her father Silas, to whom she keeps **murmuring** little sentences as to who was at church and who was not at church, and how pretty the red mountain-ash is over the Rectory wall?

"I wish *we* had a little garden, father, with double daisies in, like Mrs. Winthrop's," said Eppie, when they were out in the lane; "only they say it 'ud take a deal of **digging** and **bringing** fresh soil--and you couldn't do that, could you, father? Anyhow, I shouldn't like you to do it, for it 'ud be too hard work for you."

"Yes, I could do it, child, if you want a bit o' garden: these long evenings, I could work at taking in a little bit o' the waste, just enough for a root or two o' flowers for you; and again, i' the morning, I could have a turn wi' the **spade** before I sat down to the loom. Why didn't you tell me before as you wanted a bit o' garden?"

"*I* can dig it for you, Master Marner," said the young man in fustian, who was now by Eppie's side, **entering** into the conversation without the trouble of **formalities**. "It'll be play to me after I've done my day's work, or any odd bits o' time when the work's slack. And I'll bring you some soil from Mr. Cass's garden--he'll let me, and willing."

"Eh, Aaron, my lad, are you there?" said Silas; "I wasn't aware of you; for when Eppie's talking o' things, I see nothing but what she's a-saying. Well, if you could help me with the digging, we might get her a bit o' garden all the sooner."

Thesaurus

abstract: (*adj*) theoretical; (*n*) abridgement, epitome, summary, abridgment, precis; (*v*) abridge, filch, purloin; (*n, v*) digest, extract. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) concrete, real, literal, material, physical, specific, objective; (*v*) expand, lengthen, strengthen, insert.
bringing: (*n*) delivery, consignment, serving, service, passage, post.
digging: (*n*) excavation, excavating, digs, dug, excavate, take, locality, mining, barb, creating by removal, attack reception.
entering: (*n*) entry, entrance, admission, enrollment, penetration, ingress, registration, encroachment, entree; (*adj, n*) incoming; (*v*) go in.
formalities: (*n*) ceremony, etiquette, observance, process, procedure, protocol, manners, official procedure, rules and regulations, code of conduct, ceremonial.
good-looking: (*adj*) beautiful, comely, handsome, pretty, fine, fair, lovely, gorgeous, charming, bonny, graceful.
murmuring: (*n*) murmuration, murmur, complaint, grumble, muttering, mutter, murmur vowel; (*adj*) whispering, humming, droning, murmurous.
puts: (*n*) stocks, securities, preferred stock, common stock, bonds.
spade: (*v*) grub, delve, scoop, excavate; (*n*) nigger, coon, nigra, jigaboo, boy, black person, spit.

"Then, if you think well and good," said Aaron, "I'll come to the Stone-pits this afternoon, and we'll settle what land's to be taken in, and I'll get up an hour earlier i' the morning, and begin on it."

"But not if you don't promise me not to work at the hard digging, father," said Eppie. "For I shouldn't ha' said anything about it," she added, half-bashfully, half-roguishly, "only Mrs. Winthrop said as Aaron 'ud be so good, and --"

"And you might ha' known it without mother telling you," said Aaron. "And Master Marner knows too, I hope, as I'm able and willing to do a turn o' work for him, and he won't do me the **unkindness** to anyways take it out o' my hands."

"There, now, father, you won't work in it till it's all easy," said Eppie, "and you and me can mark out the beds, and make **holes** and plant the **roots**. It'll be a deal livelier at the Stone-pits when we've got some flowers, for I always think the flowers can see us and know what we're talking about. And I'll have a bit o' rosemary, and **bergamot**, and **thyme**, because they're so **sweet**-smelling; but there's no **lavender** only in the gentlefolks' gardens, I think."

"That's no reason why you shouldn't have some," said Aaron, "for I can bring you **slips** of anything; I'm forced to cut no end of 'em when I'm gardening, and throw 'em away mostly. There's a big bed o' lavender at the Red House: the **missis** is very fond of it."

"Well," said Silas, **gravely**, "so as you don't make free for us, or ask for anything as is worth much at the Red House: for Mr. Cass's been so good to us, and built us up the new end o' the cottage, and given us beds and things, as I couldn't abide to be imposin' for garden-stuff or anything else."

"No, no, there's no imposin'," said Aaron; "there's never a garden in all the parish but what there's endless waste in it for want o' somebody as could use everything up. It's what I think to myself sometimes, as there need nobody run short o' **victuals** if the land was made the most on, and there was never a morsel

Thesaurus

bergamot: (*n*) pulvil, orange, civet, burgamot, balm, bergamot orange.
gravely: (*adv*) seriously, soberly, severely, solemnly, badly, staidly, momentously, heavily, earnestly, weightily, grievously. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) lightheartedly, mildly, slightly; (*adj*) soft.
holes: (*n*) cavity, holes tow.
lavender: (*adj*) lilac, purple, puce, light purple, pale purple, indigo, chromatic; (*adj, n*) violet, amethyst; (*n*) shrub, genus Lavandula.
missis: (*n*) wife, missus, lady, mistress, matron, married woman.
roots: (*n*) heredity, family, origin, line, extraction, ancestry.
slips: (*n*) pad.
sweet-smelling: (*adj*) aromatic, fragrant, sweet, odorous.
thyme: (*n*) herb, rosemary, sage, herbaceous plant, parsley, creeping thyme, common thyme, basil, aromatic plant, pot herbs.
unkindness: (*n*) heartlessness, callousness, thoughtlessness, inconsideration, inconsiderateness, diskindness, insensitivity, unpleasantness, unfriendliness, unkindliness, insensitiveness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) goodwill, diplomacy, gentleness, humanity, thoughtfulness.
victuals: (*n*) food, fare, viands, victual, edible, provender, grub, sustenance, support, diet, nutriment.

but what could find its way to a mouth. It sets one thinking o' that-- gardening does. But I must go back now, else mother 'ull be in trouble as I aren't there."

"Bring her with you this afternoon, Aaron," said Eppie; "I shouldn't like to fix about the garden, and her not know everything from the first--should *you*, father?"

"Aye, bring her if you can, Aaron," said Silas; "she's sure to have a word to say as'll help us to set things on their right end."

Aaron turned back up the village, while Silas and Eppie went on up the lonely sheltered lane.

"O daddy!" she began, when they were in privacy, clasping and squeezing Silas's arm, and skipping round to give him an energetic kiss. "My little old daddy! I'm so glad. I don't think I shall want anything else when we've got a little garden; and I **knew** Aaron would dig it for us," she went on with **roguish** triumph--"I knew that very well."

"You're a deep little **puss**, you are," said Silas, with the mild passive happiness of love-crowned age in his face; "but you'll make yourself fine and **beholden** to Aaron."

"Oh, no, I shan't," said Eppie, laughing and **frisking**; "he **likes** it."

"Come, come, let me carry your prayer-book, else you'll be dropping it, jumping i' that way."

Eppie was now aware that her behaviour was under observation, but it was only the observation of a friendly donkey, **browsing** with a log fastened to his foot--a **meek** donkey, not **scornfully** critical of human trivialities, but thankful to share in them, if possible, by getting his nose scratched; and Eppie did not fail to **gratify** him with her usual notice, though it was attended with the inconvenience of his following them, painfully, up to the very door of their home.

But the sound of a sharp bark inside, as Eppie put the key in the door, modified the donkey's views, and he limped away again without bidding. The sharp bark was the sign of an excited welcome that was awaiting them from a knowing brown terrier, who, after dancing at their legs in a hysterical manner,

Thesaurus

beholden: (*adj*) thankful, indebted, obliged, indebted to, appreciative, beholding; (*adj, v*) under obligation, bound; (*v*) bounden. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) unbound, ungrateful.
browsing: (*n*) feeding, eating, reading, bruting.
frisking: (*n*) search, hunt, hunting, searching.
gratify: (*v*) delight, please, appease, accommodate, satisfy, amuse, suit, indulge, cater; (*n, v*) humor; (*adj*) contented. ANTONYMS: (*v*) dissatisfy, displease, disappoint.
knew: (*adj*) known; (*v*) recognize, wist.
likes: (*n*) kind, sort, type.
meek: (*adj*) lowly, docile, gentle, tame, low, submissive, compliant, mild, modest, quiet, kind. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) assertive, bossy, haughty, arrogant, overbearing, rebellious, disobedient, wild, harsh, brash.
puss: (*n*) cat, kitten, lass, pussy, pussycat, cunt, chit, countenance, feline, cuckoo, incision.
roguish: (*adj*) impish, dishonest, playful, naughty, sly, arch, puckish, rascally, blackguardly, bad, scoundrelly.
scornfully: (*adv*) disdainfully, disparagingly, haughtily, derogatorily, condescendingly, contumeliously, sneeringly, arrogantly, sarcastically, derisively, mockingly. ANTONYM: (*adv*) humbly.

rushed with a worrying noise at a tortoise-shell **kitten** under the loom, and then rushed back with a sharp **bark** again, as much as to say, "I have done my duty by this **feeble** creature, you perceive"; while the lady-mother of the kitten sat sunning her white **bosom** in the window, and looked round with a sleepy air of expecting caresses, though she was not going to take any trouble for them.

The presence of this happy animal life was not the only change which had come over the interior of the stone cottage. There was no bed now in the **living**-room, and the small space was well filled with decent furniture, all bright and clean enough to satisfy Dolly Winthrop's eye. The **oaken** table and three-cornered oaken chair were hardly what was likely to be seen in so poor a cottage: they had come, with the beds and other things, from the Red House; for Mr. Godfrey Cass, as every one said in the village, did very kindly by the weaver; and it was nothing but right a man should be looked on and helped by those who could afford it, when he had brought up an **orphan** child, and been father and mother to her--and had lost his money too, so as he had nothing but what he worked for week by week, and when the weaving was going down too--for there was less and less **flax** spun--and Master Marner was none so young. Nobody was jealous of the weaver, for he was **regarded** as an exceptional person, whose claims on neighbourly help were not to be matched in Raveloe. Any **superstition** that remained concerning him had taken an entirely new colour; and Mr. Macey, now a very feeble old man of fourscore and six, never seen except in his chimney-corner or sitting in the sunshine at his door-sill, was of opinion that when a man had done what Silas had done by an orphan child, it was a sign that his money would come to light again, or **leastwise** that the robber would be made to answer for it--for, as Mr. Macey observed of himself, his **faculties** were as strong as ever.

Silas sat down now and watched Eppie with a satisfied gaze as she spread the clean cloth, and set on it the potato-pie, warmed up slowly in a safe Sunday fashion, by being put into a dry pot over a slowly-dying fire, as the best substitute for an oven. For Silas would not consent to have a grate and oven added to his conveniences: he loved the old brick hearth as he had loved his

Thesaurus

bark: (*n, v*) skin, yelp, snarl, cry, rind, shout; (*v*) growl, roar; (*n*) bay, peel, crust. ANTONYMS: (*n, v*) whisper.
bosom: (*n*) heart, interior, boob, thorax, chest, bust, tit; (*n, v*) embrace; (*v*) cherish, hug; (*adj*) intimate. ANTONYMS: (*n*) outside, exteriority.
faculties: (*n*) mother wit.
feeble: (*adj*) delicate, decrepit, ailing, helpless, powerless, poor, mild, lax, thin; (*adj, v*) faint, debilitated. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) strong, vigorous, hearty, tough, effective, powerful, unrelenting, robust, potent, persuasive, able.
flax: (*n*) hemp, lint, line, feature, clothesline, flex, figure, boundary; (*v*) hit, trounce, flog.
kitten: (*n*) cat, foal, kitty, colt, foetus; (*v*) teem, flower, fructify, bear fruit, farrow, EAN.
leastwise: (*adv*) at least, at any rate, anyway, anyhow, at the least, in any case, in any event.
living-**room**: (*n*) sitting room.
oaken: (*adj*) woody.
orphan: (*n*) waif, caterpillar, nymph, nympha, cocoon, Aurelia, tyke, staddle, youngster, shaver; (*adj*) orphaned.
regarded: (*adj*) reputed.
superstition: (*n*) superstitious, taboo, religion, old wives' tale, superstitious notion, lore, folklore, fanaticism, fallacy, belief, magic. ANTONYMS: (*n*) science, truth.

brown pot--and was it not there when he had found Eppie? The gods of the hearth exist for us still; and let all new faith be tolerant of that **fetishism**, lest it bruise its own roots.

Silas ate his dinner more silently than usual, soon laying down his knife and fork, and watching half-abstractedly Eppie's play with Snap and the cat, by which her own dining was made rather a lengthy business. Yet it was a sight that might well arrest wandering thoughts: Eppie, with the **rippling** radiance of her hair and the whiteness of her rounded chin and throat set off by the dark-blue cotton gown, laughing merrily as the kitten held on with her four claws to one shoulder, like a design for a jug-handle, while Snap on the right hand and Puss on the other put up their paws towards a **morsel** which she held out of the reach of both--Snap occasionally desisting in order to **remonstrate** with the cat by a **cogent** worrying **growl** on the **greediness** and futility of her conduct; till Eppie relented, caressed them both, and divided the morsel between them.

But at last Eppie, glancing at the clock, checked the play, and said, "O daddy, you're wanting to go into the sunshine to smoke your pipe. But I must clear away first, so as the house may be tidy when godmother comes. I'll make haste--I won't be long."

Silas had taken to smoking a pipe daily during the last two years, having been strongly urged to it by the sages of Raveloe, as a practice "good for the fits"; and this advice was sanctioned by Dr. Kimble, on the ground that it was as well to try what could do no harm--a principle which was made to answer for a great deal of work in that gentleman's medical practice. Silas did not highly enjoy smoking, and often wondered how his neighbours could be so fond of it; but a humble sort of acquiescence in what was held to be good, had become a strong habit of that new self which had been developed in him since he had found Eppie on his hearth: it had been the only **clew** his bewildered mind could hold by in **cherishing** this young life that had been sent to him out of the darkness into which his gold had departed. By seeking what was **needful** for Eppie, by sharing the effect that everything produced on her, he had himself come to appropriate the forms of custom and belief which were the mould of Raveloe life;

Thesaurus

cherishing: (*n*) love, conservation.
clew: (*n*) cue, clod, glob, knob, footmark, footprint, vestige; (*v*) point out; (*adj*) pellet, globule, Pelote.
cogent: (*adj*) weighty, powerful, pithy, strong, telling, persuasive, forcible, forceful, compelling, conclusive; (*adj, v*) convincing. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) confused, weak, ineffective, impotent, invalid, irrational.
fetishism: (*n*) fetish, zoolatry, belief.
greediness: (*n*) avarice, cupidity, covetousness, eagerness, gluttony, selfishness, avidity, miserliness, hunger, stinginess, voracity. ANTONYM: (*n*) moderation.
growl: (*adj, n, v*) snarl; (*n, v*) roar, bark, howl, yap, moan, thunder; (*v*) gnarl, mutter, complain, croak.
morsel: (*n, v*) bite, mouthful; (*n*) crumb, chew, particle, fragment, taste, piece, nibble; (*adj, v*) gobbet, mite.
needful: (*adj*) necessary, essential, indispensable, required, needed, mandatory, exigent, needy; (*adj, v*) requisite; (*n*) necessity, almighty dollar.
remonstrate: (*v*) argue, complain, expostulate, object, protest, rebuke, dissuade, chide, scold, dispute, warn. ANTONYM: (*v*) agree.
rippling: (*n*) ripple, wave, riffle, corrugation, moving ridge, wavelet, ripple formation; (*adj*) flowing, billowy.

and as, with reawakening sensibilities, memory also reawakened, he had begun to **ponder** over the elements of his old faith, and blend them with his new impressions, till he recovered a consciousness of unity between his past and present. The sense of presiding goodness and the human trust which come with all pure peace and joy, had given him a dim impression that there had been some error, some mistake, which had thrown that dark shadow over the days of his best years; and as it grew more and more easy to him to open his mind to Dolly Winthrop, he gradually communicated to her all he could describe of his early life. The communication was necessarily a slow and difficult process, for Silas's **meagre** power of explanation was not **aided** by any readiness of interpretation in Dolly, whose narrow outward experience gave her no key to strange customs, and made every **novelty** a source of wonder that arrested them at every step of the narrative. It was only by fragments, and at intervals which left Dolly time to **revolve** what she had heard till it acquired some **familiarity** for her, that Silas at last arrived at the climax of the sad story--the drawing of lots, and its false testimony concerning him; and this had to be repeated in several interviews, under new questions on her part as to the nature of this plan for **detecting** the guilty and clearing the innocent.

"And yourn's the same Bible, you're sure o' that, Master Marner-- the Bible as you brought wi' you from that country--it's the same as what they've got at church, and what Eppie's a-learning to read in?"

"Yes," said Silas, "every bit the same; and there's drawing o' lots in the Bible, mind you," he added in a lower tone.

"Oh, dear, dear," said Dolly in a grieved voice, as if she were hearing an **unfavourable** report of a sick man's case. She was silent for some minutes; at last she said--

"There's wise folks, happen, as know how it all is; the parson knows, I'll be bound; but it takes big words to tell them things, and such as poor folks can't make much out on. I can never rightly know the meaning o' what I hear at church, only a bit here and there, but I know it's good words--I do. But what lies upo' your mind--it's this, Master Marner: as, if Them above had done the right

Thesaurus

aided: (*adj*) power, favored.
detecting: (*n*) spotting, investigation, catching, detective work, sleuthing, police investigation, hearing; (*adj*) observant.
familiarity: (*adj, n*) acquaintance; (*n*) intimacy, closeness, experience, casualness, conversancy, knowledge, conversance, naturalness, nearness, friendship. ANTONYMS: (*n*) unfamiliarity, formality, abnormality, distance, animosity.
meagre: (*adj*) exiguous, paltry, necessitous, miserable, marginal, meagerly, gaunt, emaciated, inadequate, deficient, beggarly. ANTONYM: (*adj*) ample.
novelty: (*adj*) news; (*n*) freshness, mutation, newness, trinket, curiosity, originality, oddity, bauble; (*n, v*) change, difference.
ponder: (*v*) meditate, consider, cogitate, deliberate, think, reflect, conceive, mull, mull over; (*n, v*) muse, study. ANTONYMS: (*v*) decide, wander, ignore.
revolve: (*v*) consider, meditate, deliberate, ponder, circle, contemplate, return, circulate, orbit, rotate; (*n, v*) gyrate.
unfavourable: (*adj*) adverse, inauspicious, untoward, hostile, contrary, inappropriate, inimical, harmful, inconvenient, awkward, unsuitable. ANTONYM: (*adj*) favorable.

thing by you, They'd never ha' let you be turned out for a wicked **thief** when you was innicent."

"Ah!" said Silas, who had now come to understand Dolly's **phraseology**, "that was what fell on me like as if it had been **red**-hot iron; because, you see, there was nobody as cared for me or clave to me above nor below. And him as I'd gone out and in wi' for ten year and more, since when we was lads and went halves--mine own familiar friend in whom I **trusted**, had **lifted** up his **heel** again' me, and worked to ruin me."

"Eh, but he was a bad un--I can't think as there's another such," said Dolly. "But I'm o'ercome, Master Marner; I'm like as if I'd waked and didn't know whether it was night or morning. I feel somehow as sure as I do when I've laid something up though I can't **justly** put my hand on it, as there was a rights in what happened to you, if one could but make it out; and you'd no call to lose heart as you did. But we'll talk on it again; for sometimes things come into my head when I'm leeching or poulticing, or such, as I could never think on when I was sitting still."

Dolly was too useful a woman not to have many opportunities of **illumination** of the kind she alluded to, and she was not long before she recurred to the subject.

"Master Marner," she said, one day that she came to bring home Eppie's washing, "I've been sore puzzled for a good bit wi' that trouble o' yourn and the drawing o' lots; and it got twisted back'ards and for'ards, as I didn't know which end to lay hold on. But it come to me all clear like, that night when I was sitting up wi' poor Bessy Fawkes, as is dead and left her children behind, God help 'em--it come to me as clear as daylight; but whether I've got hold on it now, or can anyways bring it to my tongue's end, that I don't know. For I've often a deal inside me as'll never come out; and for what you talk o' your folks in your old country niver saying prayers by heart nor saying 'em out of a book, they must be wonderful cliver; for if I didn't know "Our Father", and little bits o' good words as I can carry out o' church wi' me, I might down o' my knees every night, but nothing could I say."

Thesaurus

heel: (*n*) blackguard, dog, counter, cad, villain, scoundrel, shoe, sole, bounder, tree rest; (*v*) lean.

illumination: (*n*) brightness, illuminance, lighting, light, explanation, elucidation, edification, luminousness, luminosity, illustration; (*adj, n*) irradiation. ANTONYMS: (*n*) education, knowledge, confusion.

justly: (*adv*) accurately, fairly, correctly, honestly, lawfully, properly, exactly, uprightly, legitimately, impartially, purely. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) wrongly, unfairly, unjustifiably, unjustly, unlawfully, sinfully, falsely, immorally.

lifted: (*adj*) raised, elevated, lift, lofty, upraised, steep.

phraseology: (*n*) language, expression, phrasing, wording, idiom, vernacular, dialect, choice of words, terminology, locution; (*n, v*) style.

red-**hot**: (*adj*) impassioned, flaming, burning, fiery, incandescent, torrid, enthusiastic, boiling, up-to-date, sultry, contemporary.

thief: (*n*) burglar, bandit, pirate, plunderer, filcher, stealer, pickpocket, pilferer, crook, brigand, despoiler.

trusted: (*adj*) intimate, confidential, sure, bosom, beloved, cherished, familiar, trustworthy, indisputable, trusty, reliable.

"But you can mostly say something as I can make sense on, Mrs. Winthrop," said Silas.

"Well, then, Master Marner, it come to me summat like this: I can make nothing o' the drawing o' lots and the answer coming wrong; it 'ud mayhap take the parson to tell that, and he could only tell us i' big words. But what come to me as clear as the **daylight**, it was when I was troubling over poor Bessy Fawkes, and it allays comes into my head when I'm sorry for folks, and feel as I can't do a power to help 'em, not if I was to get up i' the middle o' the night-- it comes into my head as Them above has got a deal tenderer heart nor what I've got--for I can't be anyways better nor Them as made me; and if anything looks hard to me, it's because there's things I don't know on; and for the matter o' that, there may be plenty o' things I don't know on, for it's little as I know--that it is. And so, while I was thinking o' that, you come into my mind, Master Marner, and it all come **pouring** in:--if *I* felt i' my inside what was the right and just thing by you, and them as prayed and drawed the lots, all but that **wicked** un, if *they*'d ha' done the right thing by you if they could, isn't there Them as was at the making on us, and knows better and has a better will? And that's all as ever I can be sure on, and everything else is a big **puzzle** to me when I think on it. For there was the **fever** come and took off them as were full-growed, and left the **helpless** children; and there's the breaking o' limbs; and them as 'ud do right and be sober have to suffer by them as are contrairy--eh, there's trouble i' this world, and there's things as we can niver make out the rights on. And all as we've got to do is to trusten, Master Marner--to do the right thing as fur as we know, and to trusten. For if us as knows so little can see a bit o' good and rights, we may be sure as there's a good and a rights bigger nor what we can know--I feel it i' my own inside as it must be so. And if you could but ha' gone on trustening, Master Marner, you wouldn't ha' run away from your fellow-creaturs and been so lone."

"Ah, but that 'ud ha' been hard," said Silas, in an under-tone; "it 'ud ha' been hard to trusten then."

"And so it would," said Dolly, almost with compunction; "them things are easier said nor done; and I'm partly ashamed o' talking."

Thesaurus

daylight: (*n*) dawn, daybreak, light, morning, sunrise, clearance, sunup, daytime, broad daylight, first light, afternoon. ANTONYMS: (*n*) night, sunset, dusk, dark, sundown, twilight, darkness, nightfall.

fever: (*n*) malaria, delirium, pyrexia, heat, frenzy, feverishness, febricity, Bilious typhoid fever, Levant fever, Hectic infantile fever, Typhoid fever.

helpless: (*adj, v*) forlorn, destitute, abandoned; (*adj*) powerless, weak, defenseless, disabled, impotent, feeble, hopeless, unable. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) strong, independent, capable, invulnerable, armed, powerful, impervious.

pouring: (*adj*) gushing, teeming, flowing profusely, burbling, burbly; (*n*) casting, affusion, downpour, effusion, tapping, baptism. ANTONYM: (*adj*) light.

puzzle: (*adj, v*) perplex, confuse, embarrass; (*n*) enigma, riddle, mystery, maze; (*n, v*) nonplus; (*v*) confound, mystify, baffle. ANTONYMS: (*v*) clarify, placate, explain; (*n*) explanation.

wicked: (*adj*) bad, sinful, atrocious, evil, vile, depraved, mischievous, immoral, unholy, nasty, naughty. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) innocent, pure, pious, moral, kind, admirable, kindhearted, helpful, decent, assisting, aiding.

"Nay, nay," said Silas, "you're i' the right, Mrs. Winthrop-- you're i' the right. There's good i' this world--I've a feeling o' that now; and it makes a man feel as there's a good more nor he can see, i' spite o' the trouble and the wickedness. That drawing o' the lots is dark; but the child was sent to me: there's dealings with us--there's dealings."

This dialogue took place in Eppie's earlier years, when Silas had to part with her for two hours every day, that she might learn to read at the dame school, after he had vainly tried himself to guide her in that first step to learning. Now that she was grown up, Silas had often been led, in those moments of quiet **outpouring** which come to people who live together in perfect love, to talk with *her* too of the past, and how and why he had lived a lonely man until she had been sent to him. For it would have been impossible for him to hide from Eppie that she was not his own child: even if the most delicate reticence on the point could have been expected from Raveloe gossips in her presence, her own questions about her mother could not have been parried, as she grew up, without that complete **shrouding** of the past which would have made a painful barrier between their minds. So Eppie had long known how her mother had died on the snowy ground, and how she herself had been found on the hearth by father Silas, who had taken her golden curls for his lost guineas brought back to him. The tender and peculiar love with which Silas had reared her in almost inseparable companionship with himself, aided by the **seclusion** of their dwelling, had preserved her from the lowering influences of the village talk and habits, and had kept her mind in that freshness which is sometimes falsely supposed to be an **invariable** attribute of **rusticity**. Perfect love has a breath of poetry which can **exalt** the relations of the least-instructed human beings; and this breath of poetry had surrounded Eppie from the time when she had followed the bright gleam that beckoned her to Silas's hearth; so that it is not surprising if, in other things besides her delicate **prettiness**, she was not quite a common village maiden, but had a touch of refinement and fervour which came from no other teaching than that of tenderly-nurtured unvitiated feeling. She was too childish and simple for her imagination to **rove** into questions about her unknown father; for a long while it did not even occur to her that she must have

Thesaurus

exalt: (*v*) glorify, celebrate, animate, raise, advance, promote, elevate, praise; (*n, v*) dignify, adore, ennoble. ANTONYMS: (*v*) degrade, ridicule, debase, condemn, criticize, deprecate, desecrate, disparage.

invariable: (*adj*) fixed, consistent, even, immutable, steady, unchanging, stable, uniform, set, undeviating, unchanged. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) changing, dynamic, erratic, irregular, varied.

outpouring: (*n*) outpour, effusion, flow, outflow, gush, jet, barrage, leakage, outburst, effluence, overflow.

prettiness: (*n*) loveliness, good looks, cuteness, attraction, appeal, attractiveness, gracefulness, fineness, charm, elegance, handsomeness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) ugliness, unattractiveness.

rove: (*v*) gad, ramble, wander, range, gallivant, stray, stroll, tramp, drift, err, meander. ANTONYM: (*v*) settle.

rusticity: (*n*) inurbanity, gaucherie, stiffness, simplicity, faux pas, gaffe, coarseness, clumsiness, gracelessness; (*adj*) low life, mauvais ton.

seclusion: (*n*) retreat, segregation, retirement, isolation, secrecy, concealment, insulation, separation, hermitage; (*adj, n*) solitude, loneliness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) company, closeness, inclusion.

shrouding: (*v*) envelop.

had a father; and the first time that the idea of her mother having had a husband presented itself to her, was when Silas showed her the wedding-ring which had been taken from the wasted finger, and had been carefully preserved by him in a little lackered box **shaped** like a **shoe**. He delivered this box into Eppie's charge when she had grown up, and she often opened it to look at the ring: but still she thought hardly at all about the father of whom it was the symbol. Had she not a father very close to her, who loved her better than any real fathers in the village seemed to love their daughters? On the **contrary**, who her mother was, and how she **came** to die in that **forlornness**, were questions that often pressed on Eppie's mind. Her knowledge of Mrs. Winthrop, who was her nearest friend next to Silas, made her feel that a mother must be very precious; and she had again and again asked Silas to tell her how her mother looked, whom she was like, and how he had found her against the furze bush, led towards it by the little **footsteps** and the **outstretched** arms. The furze bush was there still; and this afternoon, when Eppie came out with Silas into the sunshine, it was the first object that arrested her eyes and thoughts.

"Father," she said, in a tone of gentle gravity, which sometimes came like a sadder, slower **cadence** across her **playfulness**, "we shall take the furze bush into the garden; it'll come into the corner, and just against it I'll put snowdrops and crocuses, 'cause Aaron says they won't die out, but'll always get more and more."

"Ah, child," said Silas, always ready to talk when he had his pipe in his hand, apparently enjoying the pauses more than the puffs, "it wouldn't do to leave out the furze bush; and there's nothing prettier, to my thinking, when it's yallow with flowers. But it's just come into my head what we're to do for a fence--mayhap Aaron can help us to a thought; but a fence we must have, else the donkeys and things 'ull come and **trample** everything down. And fencing's hard to be got at, by what I can make out."

"Oh, I'll tell you, daddy," said Eppie, clasping her hands suddenly, after a minute's thought. "There's lots o' loose stones about, some of 'em not big, and

Thesaurus

cadence: (*n*) beat, tempo, measure, rhythm, cadency, descent, time; (*n, v*) pace; (*v*) gait, step, rate.
came: (*v*) arrive, come.
contrary: (*adj, n*) contradictory, reverse; (*adj*) adverse, conflicting, unfavorable, perverse, cross, disobedient, alien, different, obstinate. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) similar, harmonious, helpful, obliging, compatible, complaisant, concordant, parallel, agreeable, cooperative, favorable.
footsteps: (*n*) road, footprints, way, trail, path, track, footpath.
forlornness: (*n*) unhappiness, devastation, sadness, loneliness, despair, bleakness, aloneness.
outstretched: (*adj*) extended, lengthy, flat, open, unfolded, stretched, broad, wiredrawn, wide, long.
playfulness: (*n*) mischief, impertinence, gaiety, archness, friskiness, pertness, merriment, humor, impishness; (*n, v*) play, sport. ANTONYM: (*n*) seriousness.
shaped: (*adj*) formed, fashioned, shapen, made, created, beaten, educated, featured, having features, built, constructed.
shoe: (*n*) horseshoe, sandal, shoes, moccasin, footgear, footwear, skid, flippers, anklet, flipper, track shoe.
trample: (*v*) oppress, stamp, squash, crush, tread, flatten, defeat, suppress, step, frustrate; (*n*) trampling.

we might lay 'em atop of one another, and make a wall. You and me could carry the smallest, and Aaron 'ud carry the rest--I know he would."

"Eh, my precious un," said Silas, "there isn't enough stones to go all round; and as for you carrying, why, wi' your little arms you couldn't carry a stone no bigger than a **turnip**. You're dillicate made, my dear," he added, with a tender intonation--"that's what Mrs. Winthrop says."

"Oh, I'm stronger than you think, daddy," said Eppie; "and if there wasn't stones enough to go all round, why they'll go part o' the way, and then it'll be easier to get **sticks** and things for the rest. See here, round the big pit, what a many stones!"

She skipped forward to the pit, meaning to lift one of the stones and **exhibit** her strength, but she started back in surprise.

"Oh, father, just come and look here," she exclaimed--"come and see how the water's gone down since yesterday. Why, yesterday the pit was ever so full!"

"Well, to be sure," said Silas, coming to her side. "Why, that's the **draining** they've begun on, since **harvest**, i' Mr. Osgood's fields, I reckon. The **foreman** said to me the other day, when I passed by 'em, "Master Marner," he said, "I shouldn't wonder if we lay your bit o' waste as dry as a bone." It was Mr. Godfrey Cass, he said, had gone into the draining: he'd been taking these fields o' Mr. Osgood."

"How odd it'll seem to have the old pit dried up!" said Eppie, turning away, and stooping to lift rather a large stone. "See, daddy, I can carry this quite well," she said, going along with much energy for a few steps, but **presently letting** it fall.

"Ah, you're fine and strong, aren't you?" said Silas, while Eppie shook her **aching** arms and laughed. "Come, come, let us go and sit down on the bank against the stile there, and have no more lifting. You might hurt yourself, child. You'd need have somebody to work for you--and my arm isn't over strong."

Silas uttered the last sentence slowly, as if it implied more than met the ear; and Eppie, when they sat down on the bank, nestled close to his side, and, taking

Thesaurus

aching: (*adj*) sore, achy, hurt, uncomfortable, tender, hurtful, agonizing; (*n*) ache, pain, hurting; (*v*) griped.
draining: (*n*) drainage, emptying, refinement; (*adj*) wearing, ruinous, tiresome, fatiguing, irksome, tiring, strenuous; (*v*) consume. ANTONYM: (*adj*) undemanding.
exhibit: (*adj, n, v*) display; (*v*) evince, evidence, expose, demonstrate, disclose, flaunt, announce, present, show, produce. ANTONYMS: (*v*) hide, cover; (*n*) concealment, hiding.
foreman: (*n*) boss, master, overseer, gaffer, supervisor, ganger, craftsman, straw boss, foreperson, leader, foremen. ANTONYM: (*n*) worker.
harvest: (*n, v*) fruit; (*v*) gain, glean, gather, amass, get, reap, pick; (*n*) ingathering, profit, produce.
letting: (*n*) lease, rental, let, renting, hire, leasing, rent, belongings, permission; (*adj*) lenient.
presently: (*adv*) instantly, directly, currently, before long, shortly, soon, now, at present, readily, just, actually. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) later, now, formerly.
sticks: (*n*) backwoods, firewood, frontier, outskirts, suburb, town, wilderness, brushwood, high sticks; (*adj*) distant.
turnip: (*n*) rutabaga, Swede, root vegetable, cruciferous vegetable, white turnip, clock.

hold **caressingly** of the arm that was not over strong, held it on her lap, while Silas puffed again **dutifully** at the pipe, which occupied his other arm. An ash in the hedgerow behind made a fretted screen from the sun, and threw happy **playful** shadows all about them.

"Father," said Eppie, very gently, after they had been sitting in silence a little while, "if I was to be married, ought I to be married with my mother's ring?"

Silas gave an almost **imperceptible** start, though the question fell in with the under-current of thought in his own mind, and then said, in a subdued tone, "Why, Eppie, have you been a-thinking on it?"

"Only this last week, father," said Eppie, **ingenuously**, "since Aaron talked to me about it."

"And what did he say?" said Silas, still in the same subdued way, as if he were anxious lest he should fall into the slightest tone that was not for Eppie's good.

"He said he should like to be married, because he was a-going in four-and-twenty, and had got a deal of gardening work, now Mr. Mott's given up; and he goes twice a-week regular to Mr. Cass's, and once to Mr. Osgood's, and they're going to take him on at the Rectory."

"And who is it as he's wanting to marry?" said Silas, with rather a sad smile.

"Why, me, to be sure, daddy," said Eppie, with dimpling laughter, **kissing** her father's cheek; "as if he'd want to marry anybody else!"

"And you mean to have him, do you?" said Silas.

"Yes, some time," said Eppie, "I don't know when. Everybody's married some time, Aaron says. But I told him that wasn't true: for, I said, look at father--he's never been married."

"No, child," said Silas, "your father was a lone man till you was sent to him."

"But you'll never be lone again, father," said Eppie, tenderly. "That was what Aaron said--"I could never think o' taking you away from Master Marner, Eppie." And I said, "It 'ud be no use if you did, Aaron." And he wants us all to

Thesaurus

caressingly: (*adv*) caressively, kissingly.
dutifully: (*adv*) submissively, obediently, deferentially, compliantly, conscientiously, devotedly, duteously, docilely, loyally, respectfully, meekly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) carelessly, irresponsibly, unfaithfully, assertively.
imperceptible: (*adj*) invisible, intangible, insensible, faint, evanescent, inaudible, negligible, indiscernible, unseen, unnoticeable, gentle. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) obvious, overwhelming, clear, visible, perceptible, heavy, noticeable, definite, considerable, conspicuous, strong.
ingenuously: (*adv*) artlessly, sincerely, innocently, candidly, naively, frankly, outspokenly, plainly, naturally, unsophisticatedly, straightforwardly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) artfully, dishonestly, pretentiously.
kissing: (*n*) hugging, cuddling, fondling, arousal, foreplay, necking; (*adj*) embracing, adhering closely, billing, clinging, interosculant.
playful: (*adj*) frisky, humorous, kittenish, mischievous, skittish, impish, naughty, merry, lighthearted, frivolous, frolicsome. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) serious, lethargic, solemn, staid, subdued, heavy.

live together, so as you needn't work a bit, father, only what's for your own pleasure; and he'd be as good as a son to you--that was what he said."

"And should you like that, Eppie?" said Silas, looking at her.

"I shouldn't mind it, father," said Eppie, quite simply. "And I should like things to be so as you needn't work much. But if it wasn't for that, I'd sooner things didn't change. I'm very happy: I like Aaron to be **fond** of me, and come and see us often, and **behave** pretty to you--he always *does* behave pretty to you, doesn't he, father?"

"Yes, child, nobody could behave better," said Silas, **emphatically**. "He's his mother's lad."

"But I don't want any change," said Eppie. "I should like to go on a long, long while, just as we are. Only Aaron does want a change; and he made me cry a bit--only a bit--because he said I didn't care for him, for if I cared for him I should want us to be married, as he did."

"Eh, my blessed child," said Silas, **laying** down his pipe as if it were useless to pretend to smoke any longer, "you're o'er young to be married. We'll ask Mrs. Winthrop--we'll ask Aaron's mother what *she* thinks: if there's a right thing to do, she'll come at it. But there's this to be thought on, Eppie: things *will* change, whether we like it or no; things won't go on for a long while just as they are and no difference. I shall get older and helplesser, and be a burden on you, **belike**, if I don't go away from you altogether. Not as I mean you'd think me a burden--I know you wouldn't--but it 'ud be hard upon you; and when I look for'ard to that, I like to think as you'd have somebody else besides me--somebody young and strong, as'll **outlast** your own life, and take care on you to the end." Silas paused, and, **resting** his wrists on his knees, lifted his hands up and down meditatively as he looked on the ground.

"Then, would you like me to be married, father?" said Eppie, with a little **trembling** in her voice.

"I'll not be the man to say no, Eppie," said Silas, emphatically; "but we'll ask your **godmother**. She'll wish the right thing by you and her son too."

Thesaurus

behave: (*n, v*) conduct, exercise; (*v*) bear, deal, deport, operate, perform, acquit, walk, react, go. ANTONYMS: (*v*) misdemean, malfunction.

belike: (*adv*) probably, likely, presumably, perhaps, believably, in all probability.

emphatically: (*adv*) decidedly, definitely, positively, categorically, flatly, distinctly, absolutely, explicitly, forcefully, firmly, expressly.

fond: (*adj*) affectionate, caring, devoted, tender, loving, amorous, delicate, adoring, doting, ardent, attached. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) aversion, cold, rough.

godmother: (*n*) sponsor, godchild, godparent.

laying: (*n*) egg laying, placing, parturition, place, repose, setting, put, position, lay, oyster park, oviposition.

outlast: (*v*) outlive, endure, outstay, outwear, live through, remain, hold out, come through, continue, live on, go.

resting: (*adj*) idle, quiescent, inactive, dormant, quiet, sleeping, reclining, obligatory, unemployed, asleep; (*n*) repose.

trembling: (*adj, n*) shaking; (*adj, n, v*) tremor; (*adj*) shaky, quaking, shivering, flutter; (*n*) palpitation, quiver, vibration, shiver, quake. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) stable, steady.

"There they come, then," said Eppie. "Let us go and **meet** 'em. Oh, the **pipe**! won't you have it lit again, father?" said Eppie, **lifting** that **medicinal appliance** from the ground.

"Nay, child," said Silas, "I've done **enough** for to-day. I think, **mayhap**, a little of it does me more good than so much at once."

Thesaurus

appliance: (*n*) apparatus, device, gadget, facility, machine, implement, furniture, convenience, contrivance, application, gear.
enough: (*adj*) ample, adequate, competent, decent; (*n*) adequacy, sufficiency, fill; (*adv*) rather, amply, adequately; (*adv, n*) plenty. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) insufficient, deficient, wanting, scant; (*adv*) insufficiently, inadequately; (*n*) insufficiency, deficiency, inadequacy, shortage.
lifting: (*n*) rising, hoisting, plagiarism, restyling, copying, jacking; (*adj*) elating, enlivening, exciting, invigorating, thrilling.
mayhap: (*adv*) haply, may be, possibly, peradventure, perchance, perhaps, by chance.
medicinal: (*adj*) medical, medicative, healing, remedial, therapeutic, healthful, medical services, theriacal, external, containing medicine; (*n*) drug.
meet: (*v*) find, converge, assemble, gather, fulfill, congregate, answer, cross, confront, intersect; (*adv, v*) encounter. ANTONYMS: (*v*) diverge, disperse, separate, part, leave, differ, disband.
pipe: (*n*) conduit, duct, flue, passage, pipage; (*n, v*) channel, cry; (*v*) squeak, sing, peep, screech.

CHAPTER XVII

While Silas and Eppie were seated on the bank discoursing in the fleckered shade of the ash tree, Miss Priscilla Lammeter was resisting her sister's arguments, that it would be better to take tea at the Red House, and let her father have a long nap, than drive home to the Warrens so soon after dinner. The family party (of four only) were seated round the table in the dark wainscoted parlour, with the Sunday **dessert** before them, of fresh filberts, apples, and pears, duly ornamented with leaves by Nancy's own hand before the bells had rung for church.

A great change has come over the dark wainscoted parlour since we saw it in Godfrey's bachelor days, and under the **wifeless** reign of the old Squire. Now all is polish, on which no yesterday's dust is ever allowed to rest, from the yard's width of oaken boards round the carpet, to the old Squire's gun and whips and walking-sticks, ranged on the stag's antlers above the **mantelpiece**. All other signs of sporting and outdoor occupation Nancy has removed to another room; but she has brought into the Red House the habit of filial **reverence**, and **preserves sacredly** in a place of honour these relics of her husband's departed father. The tankards are on the side-table still, but the **bossed** silver is **undimmed** by handling, and there are no **dregs** to send forth unpleasant suggestions: the only prevailing scent is of the lavender and rose-leaves that fill

Thesaurus

bossed: (*v*) nodular, bunchy; (*adj*) embossed.
dessert: (*n*) sweet, afters, pudding, ambrosia, blancmange, compote, confectionery, confection; (*v*) bait, bever, dejeuner.
dregs: (*n*) residue, grounds, refuse, sediment, dreg, remains, settlings, feces, trash, waste, dross.
mantelpiece: (*n*) chimneypiece, mantlepiece, shelf, chimneybreast, blanket, cape, sill, clavy, curtain, drape, drapery.
preserves: (*n*) conserve, jam, chowchow, conserves, jelly, marmalade, canned food, confiture, European federation of importers of dried fruit, preserved food, apple butter.
reverence: (*n, v*) respect, regard, fear, worship, honor, esteem, adore; (*n*) deference, adoration, admiration, awe. ANTONYMS: (*n*) despise, disrespect, irreverence, disdain, disparagement, contempt; (*v*) dishonor.
sacredly: (*adv*) divinely, saintly, solemnly, hallowedly, piously, sanctifiedly, inviolately, spiritually, blessedly, dedicatedly, holily.
undimmed: (*adj*) sunshiny, promising, sunny, splendid, smart, shining, lustrous, fresh, brilliant, shiny, burnished.
wifeless: (*adj*) unmarried, spouseless.

the vases of Derbyshire **spar**. All is **purity** and order in this once dreary room, for, fifteen years ago, it was entered by a new presiding spirit.

"Now, father," said Nancy, "*is* there any call for you to go home to tea? Mayn't you just as well stay with us?--such a beautiful evening as it's likely to be."

The old gentleman had been talking with Godfrey about the increasing poor-rate and the **ruinous** times, and had not heard the dialogue between his daughters.

"My dear, you must ask Priscilla," he said, in the once firm voice, now become rather broken. "She manages me and the farm too."

"And reason good as I should manage you, father," said Priscilla, "else you'd be giving yourself your death with rheumatism. And as for the farm, if anything turns out wrong, as it can't but do in these times, there's nothing kills a man so soon as having nobody to find fault with but himself. It's a deal the best way o' being master, to let somebody else do the **ordering**, and keep the blaming in your own hands. It 'ud save many a man a stroke, *I* believe."

"Well, well, my dear," said her father, with a quiet laugh, "I didn't say you don't manage for everybody's good."

"Then manage so as you may stay tea, Priscilla," said Nancy, putting her hand on her sister's arm **affectionately**. "Come now; and we'll go round the garden while father has his nap."

"My dear child, he'll have a beautiful nap in the gig, for I shall drive. And as for staying tea, I can't hear of it; for there's this **dairymaid**, now she knows she's to be married, turned Michaelmas, she'd as lief **pour** the new milk into the pig-trough as into the pans. That's the way with 'em all: it's as if they thought the world 'ud be new-made because they're to be married. So come and let me put my **bonnet** on, and there'll be time for us to walk round the garden while the horse is being put in."

Thesaurus

affectionately: (*adv*) lovingly, tenderly, warmly, dearly, caringly, devotedly, kindly, ardently, cordially, amorously, dotingly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) disapprovingly, frostily, roughly.

bonnet: (*n*) cap, protection, chapeau, tile, wimple, beret, lid, cowling, castor, poke bonnet, sunbonnet.

dairymaid: (*n*) farmhand, fieldhand, dey.

ordering: (*n*) disposition, sequence, order, disposal, grading, adjustment, management, decree, configuration, classification; (*adj*) imperative.

pour: (*v*) gush, shed, decant, scatter, stream, flow, pelt, discharge, teem, infuse; (*n, v*) overflow. ANTONYMS: (*v*) drizzle, trickle.

purity: (*n*) holiness, cleanness, cleanliness, virtue, honor, perfection, pureness, sanctity, chastity, elegance; (*adj, n*) clearness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) coarseness, impurity, contamination, clutter, dirtiness, corruption, mustiness.

ruinous: (*adj*) harmful, baleful, disastrous, calamitous, injurious, deleterious, dilapidated, blasting, baneful, pernicious; (*adj, n*) subversive. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) beneficial, fortunate, harmless.

spar: (*n*) beam, mast, contention, strife, pole, feldspar; (*v*) box, fight, bicker, disagree, altercate. ANTONYM: (*v*) agree.

When the sisters were treading the neatly-swept garden-walks, between the bright **turf** that contrasted pleasantly with the dark cones and arches and wall-like hedges of yew, Priscilla said--

"I'm as glad as anything at your husband's making that exchange o' land with cousin Osgood, and beginning the **dairying**. It's a thousand pities you didn't do it before; for it'll give you something to fill your mind. There's nothing like a dairy if folks want a bit o' worrit to make the days pass. For as for rubbing furniture, when you can once see your face in a table there's nothing else to look for; but there's always something fresh with the dairy; for even in the depths o' winter there's some pleasure in **conquering** the butter, and making it come whether or no. My dear," added Priscilla, pressing her sister's hand affectionately as they walked side by side, "you'll never be low when you've got a dairy."

"Ah, Priscilla," said Nancy, returning the pressure with a grateful glance of her clear eyes, "but it won't make up to Godfrey: a dairy's not so much to a man. And it's only what he cares for that ever makes me low. I'm **contented** with the **blessings** we have, if he could be contented."

"It drives me past patience," said Priscilla, impetuously, "that way o' the men--always wanting and wanting, and never easy with what they've got: they can't sit comfortable in their chairs when they've neither **ache** nor pain, but either they must stick a pipe in their mouths, to make 'em better than well, or else they must be **swallowing** something strong, though they're forced to make haste before the next meal comes in. But **joyful** be it spoken, our father was never that sort o' man. And if it had pleased God to make you ugly, like me, so as the men wouldn't ha' run after you, we might have kept to our own family, and had nothing to do with folks as have got uneasy blood in their veins."

"Oh, don't say so, Priscilla," said Nancy, **repenting** that she had called forth this **outburst**; "nobody has any occasion to find fault with Godfrey. It's natural he should be disappointed at not having any children: every man likes to have somebody to work for and lay by for, and he always counted so on making a fuss

Thesaurus

ache: (*n, v*) hunger, pain, hurt, yen; (*n*) twinge, thirst; (*v*) long, yearn, itch, smart, pine. ANTONYMS: (*v*) help, assist; (*n*) comfort, ease, health, relief, joy.
blessings: (*n*) blessing, godsend.
conquering: (*adj*) triumphant, winning, overcoming, glorious, proud, successful; (*n*) conquest, seizure, reverse, subjection, subjugation.
contented: (*adj*) content, happy, comfortable, quiet, cheerful, smug, complacent, satisfied, easy, proud, delighted. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) discontented, unhappy, depressed, unsatisfied, sad, anxious.
dairying: (*n*) farming, husbandry, agriculture, dairy industry.
joyful: (*adj*) gay, glad, elated, cheerful, gleeful, cheery, delighted, joyous, jolly, blissful, blithe. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) miserable, sorrowful, unhappy, despairing, unpleasant, staid, sorry, disappointed, depressed, heavy.
outburst: (*n*) explosion, spurt, eruption, fit, burst, flash, effusion, gush, ebullition, blast, rage.
repenting: (*adj*) repentant.
swallowing: (*adj*) absorptive, unsuspecting, absorbent, absorbing; (*n*) consumption.
turf: (*n*) sward, greensward, ground, grass, field, peat, lawn, green, divot, Corso, race course.

with 'em when they were little. There's many another man 'ud **hanker** more than he does. He's the best of husbands."

"Oh, I know," said Priscilla, smiling **sarcastically**, "I know the way o' **wives**; they set one on to abuse their husbands, and then they turn round on one and praise 'em as if they wanted to sell 'em. But father'll be waiting for me; we must turn now."

The large gig with the steady old grey was at the front door, and Mr. Lammeter was already on the stone steps, passing the time in recalling to Godfrey what very fine points Speckle had when his master used to ride him.

"I always *would* have a good horse, you know," said the old gentleman, not liking that spirited time to be quite **effaced** from the memory of his juniors.

"Mind you bring Nancy to the Warrens before the week's out, Mr. Cass," was Priscilla's parting injunction, as she took the reins, and shook them gently, by way of friendly **incitement** to Speckle.

"I shall just take a turn to the fields against the Stone-pits, Nancy, and look at the draining," said Godfrey.

"You'll be in again by tea-time, dear?"

"Oh, yes, I shall be back in an hour."

It was Godfrey's custom on a Sunday afternoon to do a little **contemplative** farming in a leisurely walk. Nancy seldom accompanied him; for the women of her generation--unless, like Priscilla, they took to outdoor management--were not given to much walking beyond their own house and garden, finding sufficient exercise in domestic duties. So, when Priscilla was not with her, she usually sat with Mant's Bible before her, and after following the text with her eyes for a little while, she would gradually permit them to wander as her thoughts had already insisted on wandering.

But Nancy's Sunday thoughts were rarely quite out of keeping with the **devout** and **reverential** intention implied by the book spread open before her. She was not theologically instructed enough to discern very clearly the relation between the sacred documents of the past which she opened without method,

Thesaurus

contemplative: (*adj, v*) reflective, pensive, wistful, meditative, introspective; (*adj*) broody, brooding, speculative, ruminative, musing; (*v*) museful. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) shallow, vacuous, blank, thoughtless, disregarding, unreflective, satisfied.

devout: (*adj*) pious, devoted, saintly, heartfelt, holy, dear, devotional, hearty, earnest; (*adj, v*) pure; (*adj, n*) godly. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) irreligious, agnostic, impious, irreverent, unbelieving, undevout, unholy, atheistic, secular, uncommitted.

effaced: (*adj*) obliterated.

hanker: (*v*) long, aspire, desire, crave, yearn, wish, longing, sigh, languish, pine, itch.

incitement: (*n*) impetus, incentive, incitation, encouragement, fomentation, stimulus, stimulation, provocation, motive, impulse; (*n, v*) goad. ANTONYMS: (*n*) prevention, deterrent, disincentive.

reverential: (*adj, v*) deferential; (*adj*) reverent, dutiful, solemn, pious, devotional, devout, obedient, godly, religious; (*v*) decorous. ANTONYM: (*adj*) irreverent.

sarcastically: (*adv*) satirically, mordantly, sharply, bitingly, ironically, tartly, cynically, scornfully, mockingly, scathingly, derisively. ANTONYM: (*adv*) gently.

wives: (*n*) woman.

and her own obscure, simple life; but the spirit of rectitude, and the sense of responsibility for the effect of her conduct on others, which were strong elements in Nancy's character, had made it a habit with her to **scrutinize** her past feelings and actions with self-questioning **solicitude**. Her mind not being courted by a great variety of subjects, she filled the vacant moments by living inwardly, again and again, through all her remembered experience, especially through the fifteen years of her married time, in which her life and its significance had been doubled. She recalled the small details, the words, tones, and looks, in the critical scenes which had opened a new epoch for her by giving her a deeper insight into the relations and trials of life, or which had called on her for some little effort of **forbearance**, or of painful adherence to an imagined or real duty--asking herself continually whether she had been in any respect **blamable**. This excessive rumination and self-questioning is perhaps a morbid habit inevitable to a mind of much moral sensibility when shut out from its due share of outward activity and of practical claims on its affections--inevitable to a noble-hearted, childless woman, when her lot is narrow. "I can do so little--have I done it all well?" is the perpetually recurring thought; and there are no voices calling her away from that **soliloquy**, no peremptory demands to divert energy from vain regret or superfluous scruple.

There was one main thread of painful experience in Nancy's married life, and on it hung certain deeply-felt scenes, which were the oftenest revived in retrospect. The short dialogue with Priscilla in the garden had determined the current of retrospect in that frequent direction this particular Sunday afternoon. The first wandering of her thought from the text, which she still attempted dutifully to follow with her eyes and silent lips, was into an imaginary enlargement of the defence she had set up for her husband against Priscilla's implied blame. The vindication of the loved object is the best balm affection can find for its wounds:--"A man must have so much on his mind," is the belief by which a wife often supports a cheerful face under rough answers and **unfeeling** words. And Nancy's deepest wounds had all come from the perception that the absence of children from their hearth was **dwelt** on in her husband's mind as a **privation** to which he could not reconcile himself.

Thesaurus

blamable: (*adj*) faulty, culpable, reprehensible, blameworthy, blameable, blameful, censurable, delinquent, reprovable, condemnable, accountable.
dwelt: (*v*) dwell, inhabit.
forbearance: (*n*) patience, clemency, pardon, abstention, abstinence, mercy, longanimity, avoidance, postponement, indulgence, restraint. ANTONYMS: (*n*) impatience, intolerance.
privation: (*n*) hardship, need, deprivation, necessity, poverty, deficiency, misery, impoverishment, destitution, dearth; (*n, v*) loss. ANTONYM: (*n*) affluence.
scrutinize: (*v*) inspect, examine, review, consider, audit, investigate, explore, search, analyze, check; (*adj, v*) scan. ANTONYM: (*v*) ignore.
solicitude: (*n*) care, consideration, anxiety, thought, apprehension, regard, attention, fear, disquietude, heed, fret. ANTONYMS: (*n*) negligence, serenity, thoughtlessness.
soliloquy: (*n*) language, oral communication, apostrophe.
unfeeling: (*adj*) harsh, impassive, cold, cruel, callous, merciless, pitiless, ruthless, numb, insensible, insensitive. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) caring, sympathetic, sensitive, kind, understanding, merciful, feeling, warm, tactful, concerned, compassionate.

Yet sweet Nancy might have been expected to feel still more keenly the denial of a blessing to which she had looked forward with all the varied expectations and preparations, solemn and **prettily** trivial, which fill the mind of a loving woman when she expects to become a mother. Was there not a drawer filled with the neat work of her hands, all **unworn** and untouched, just as she had arranged it there fourteen years ago--just, but for one little dress, which had been made the burial-dress? But under this immediate personal trial Nancy was so firmly **unmurmuring**, that years ago she had suddenly renounced the habit of visiting this drawer, lest she should in this way be cherishing a longing for what was not given.

Perhaps it was this very severity towards any indulgence of what she held to be sinful regret in herself, that made her shrink from applying her own standard to her husband. "It is very different-- it is much worse for a man to be disappointed in that way: a woman can always be satisfied with devoting herself to her husband, but a man wants something that will make him look forward more--and sitting by the fire is so much duller to him than to a woman." And always, when Nancy reached this point in her meditations--trying, with predetermined sympathy, to see everything as Godfrey saw it-- there came a renewal of self-questioning. *Had* she done everything in her power to lighten Godfrey's privation? Had she really been right in the resistance which had cost her so much pain six years ago, and again four years ago--the resistance to her husband's wish that they should adopt a child? Adoption was more remote from the ideas and **habits** of that time than of our own; still Nancy had her opinion on it. It was as necessary to her mind to have an opinion on all topics, not exclusively masculine, that had come under her notice, as for her to have a precisely marked place for every article of her personal property: and her opinions were always principles to be **unwaveringly** acted on. They were firm, not because of their basis, but because she held them with a **tenacity** inseparable from her mental action. On all the duties and **proprieties** of life, from filial behaviour to the arrangements of the evening toilette, pretty Nancy Lammeter, by the time she was three-and-twenty, had her **unalterable** little code, and had formed every one of her habits in strict accordance with that code. She carried

Thesaurus

habits: (*n*) behavior, decorum, pratique.
prettily: (*adv*) beautifully, charmingly, pleasantly, handsomely, finely, neatly, gracefully, picturesquely, elegantly, delightfully, pleasingly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) unattractively, unpleasantly.
proprieties: (*n*) custom.
tenacity: (*n*) persistence, determination, resolution, doggedness, resolve, pertinacity, strength, persistency, fortitude, firmness; (*adj*) obstinacy. ANTONYMS: (*n*) indifference, slackness, weakness, cowardice, flexibility, indecision.
unalterable: (*adj*) constant, inalterable, immutable, permanent, invariable, firm, changeless, rigid, stable, irrevocable, unchangeable. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) alterable, impermanent, temporary, fluid, flexible.
unmurmuring: (*adj*) unprotesting.
unwaveringly: (*adv*) firmly, unfalteringly, loyally, fixedly, resolutely, faithfully, solidly, unswervingly, consistently, steadily, firm. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) unreliably, halfheartedly.
unworn: (*adj*) unallayed, unwithered, unshaken, not habituated, not familiar, lately manifested, fresh, modern, new, new scenes, recent. ANTONYM: (*adj*) worn.

these decided judgments within her in the most **unobtrusive** way: they rooted themselves in her mind, and grew there as quietly as grass. Years ago, we know, she insisted on dressing like Priscilla, because "it was right for sisters to dress alike", and because "she would do what was right if she wore a gown dyed with cheese-colouring". That was a trivial but typical instance of the mode in which Nancy's life was regulated.

It was one of those rigid principles, and no petty **egoistic** feeling, which had been the ground of Nancy's difficult resistance to her husband's wish. To adopt a child, because children of your own had been denied you, was to try and choose your lot in spite of Providence: the adopted child, she was convinced, would never turn out well, and would be a curse to those who had **wilfully** and **rebelliously** sought what it was clear that, for some high reason, they were better without. When you saw a thing was not meant to be, said Nancy, it was a **bounden** duty to leave off so much as wishing for it. And so far, perhaps, the wisest of men could scarcely make more than a verbal improvement in her principle. But the conditions under which she held it apparent that a thing was not meant to be, depended on a more peculiar mode of thinking. She would have given up making a purchase at a particular place if, on three successive times, rain, or some other cause of Heaven's sending, had formed an obstacle; and she would have anticipated a broken limb or other heavy misfortune to any one who persisted in spite of such indications.

"But why should you think the child would turn out ill?" said Godfrey, in his remonstrances. "She has thriven as well as child can do with the weaver; and *he* adopted her. There isn't such a pretty little girl anywhere else in the parish, or one **fitter** for the station we could give her. Where can be the likelihood of her being a curse to anybody?"

"Yes, my dear Godfrey," said Nancy, who was sitting with her hands tightly clasped together, and with yearning, **regretful** affection in her eyes. "The child may not turn out ill with the weaver. But, then, he didn't go to seek her, as we should be doing. It will be wrong: I feel sure it will. Don't you remember what that lady we met at the Royston Baths told us about the child her sister adopted?

Thesaurus

bounden: (*adj*) bound, indebted, compulsory, binding.
egoistic: (*adj*) selfish, egotistic, vain, smug, self-serving, self-centred, complacent, egoistical, egotistical, narcissistic, insensitive. ANTONYM: (*adj*) altruism.
fitter: (*n*) adjuster, machinist, sartor, cutter, mounter, erector; (*adj*) suitable, healthier.
rebelliously: (*adv*) mutinously, contumaciously, riotously, seditiously, disobediently, insurgently, recalcitrantly, revolutionarily, unruly, naughtily, insubordinately. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) submissively, loyally, meekly.
regretful: (*adj*) penitent, sorry, apologetic, remorseful, nostalgic, bad, sad, melancholy, repentant, unhappy, mournful. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) joyful, unremorseful, glad, satisfied.
unobtrusive: (*adj*) unassuming, discreet, inconspicuous, restrained, unnoticeable, humble, unostentatious, diffident, reserved, unpretentious, subdued. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) obtrusive, conspicuous, elaborate, flaunting, noticeable, loud, brash, obvious.
wilfully: (*adv*) willfully, designedly, deliberately, knowingly, frowardly, headstrongly, consciously, stubbornly, purposefully, persistently, on purpose.

That was the only adopting I ever heard of: and the child was transported when it was twenty-three. Dear Godfrey, don't ask me to do what I know is wrong: I should never be happy again. I know it's very hard for *you*--it's easier for me--but it's the will of Providence."

It might seem singular that Nancy--with her religious theory pieced together out of narrow social traditions, fragments of church doctrine **imperfectly** understood, and **girlish** reasonings on her small experience--should have **arrived** by herself at a way of thinking so nearly akin to that of many devout people, whose beliefs are held in the shape of a system quite remote from her knowledge--singular, if we did not know that human beliefs, like all other natural growths, **elude** the barriers of system.

Godfrey had from the first specified Eppie, then about twelve years old, as a child suitable for them to adopt. It had never occurred to him that Silas would rather part with his life than with Eppie. Surely the weaver would wish the best to the child he had taken so much trouble with, and would be glad that such good fortune should happen to her: she would always be very grateful to him, and he would be well provided for to the end of his life--provided for as the excellent part he had done by the child deserved. Was it not an appropriate thing for people in a higher station to take a charge off the hands of a man in a lower? It seemed an eminently appropriate thing to Godfrey, for reasons that were known only to himself; and by a common **fallacy**, he imagined the measure would be easy because he had private motives for **desiring** it. This was rather a coarse mode of **estimating** Silas's relation to Eppie; but we must remember that many of the **impressions** which Godfrey was likely to gather concerning the labouring people around him would favour the idea that deep affections can hardly go along with **callous** palms and scant means; and he had not had the opportunity, even if he had had the power, of entering intimately into all that was exceptional in the weaver's experience. It was only the want of adequate knowledge that could have made it possible for Godfrey deliberately to entertain an unfeeling project: his natural kindness had outlived that **blighting** time of

Thesaurus

arrived: (*adv*) here, at home; (*adj*) accepted.
blighting: (*adj*) biting.
callous: (*adj*) heartless, insensible, relentless, cruel, brutal, obdurate, hard, hardened, hardhearted, indifferent, insensitive. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) caring, merciful, compassionate, sensitive, sympathetic, tender, nice, thoughtful, affectionate, concerned, flattering.
desiring: (*adj*) envious, insatiable, desirous, eager; (*adv*) fleshly.
elude: (*adj, v*) evade, circumvent; (*v*) dodge, duck, avoid, skirt, escape, baffle, defy, shirk, bilk. ANTONYMS: (*v*) face, encounter, meet, acquire.
estimating: (*n*) estimation.
fallacy: (*n*) delusion, deception, paralogism, illusion, misconception, falsehood, inaccuracy, idol, falsity, sophistry; (*adj, n*) subterfuge. ANTONYMS: (*n*) fact, truth, validity, verity, understanding, correctness.
girlish: (*adj*) boyish, childish, kittenish, juvenile, adolescent, innocent, schoolgirlish, babyish, immature, youthful, female.
imperfectly: (*adv*) faultily, defectively, badly, deficiently, incompletely, partially, poorly, inadequately, sketchily, incorrectly, halfway. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) perfectly, flawlessly, correctly, well.
impressions: (*n*) impersonation, imitation.

cruel wishes, and Nancy's praise of him as a husband was not founded entirely on a wilful illusion.

"I was right," she said to herself, when she had recalled all their scenes of discussion--"I feel I was right to say him nay, though it hurt me more than anything; but how good Godfrey has been about it! Many men would have been very angry with me for standing out against their wishes; and they might have thrown out that they'd had ill-luck in marrying me; but Godfrey has never been the man to say me an unkind word. It's only what he can't hide: everything seems so blank to him, I know; and the land--what a difference it 'ud make to him, when he goes to see after things, if he'd children growing up that he was doing it all for! But I won't **murmur**; and perhaps if he'd married a woman who'd have had children, she'd have vexed him in other ways."

This possibility was Nancy's chief comfort; and to give it greater strength, she laboured to make it impossible that any other wife should have had more perfect tenderness. She had been *forced* to vex him by that one denial. Godfrey was not insensible to her loving effort, and did Nancy no injustice as to the motives of her **obstinacy**. It was impossible to have lived with her fifteen years and not be aware that an **unselfish** clinging to the right, and a sincerity clear as the flower-born dew, were her main characteristics; indeed, Godfrey felt this so strongly, that his own more **wavering** nature, too averse to facing difficulty to be **unvaryingly** simple and truthful, was kept in a certain awe of this gentle wife who watched his looks with a yearning to obey them. It seemed to him impossible that he should ever confess to her the truth about Eppie: she would never recover from the repulsion the story of his earlier marriage would create, told to her now, after that long concealment. And the child, too, he thought, must become an object of repulsion: the very sight of her would be painful. The shock to Nancy's mingled pride and ignorance of the world's evil might even be too much for her delicate frame. Since he had married her with that secret on his heart, he must keep it there to the last. Whatever else he did, he could not make an **irreparable** breach between himself and this long-loved wife.

Thesaurus

irreparable: (*adj*) incurable, hopeless, irremediable, irrecoverable, incorrigible, irredeemable, irretrievable, remediless, irreclaimable, unalterable, irrevocable. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) impermanent, repairable, temporary, superficial.

murmur: (*n, v*) grumble, mumble, hum, whisper, mutter, whine, babble, drone; (*v*) complain, bubble, breathe.

obstinacy: (*n*) stubbornness, firmness, bullheadedness, determination, contumacy, mulishness, impenitence, resolve, resoluteness, impenitency, pertinacity. ANTONYMS: (*n*) cooperation, compliance.

unselfish: (*adj*) selfless, altruistic, disinterested, liberal, magnanimous, philanthropic, considerate, beneficent, charitable, kind, helpful. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) greedy, uncharitable, thoughtless.

unvaryingly: (*adv*) consistently, unchangingly, steadily, changelessly, evenly, homogeneously, regularly, unfailingly, equally, unchangedly, invariantly.

wavering: (*adj, v*) vacillating; (*n*) fluctuation, hesitation, vacillation; (*adj*) irresolute, indecisive, undecided, hesitant, uncertain, variable, changeable. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) decided, constant, resolute, stable, decisive; (*n*) resolution, stability.

Meanwhile, why could he not make up his mind to the absence of children from a hearth brightened by such a wife? Why did his mind fly uneasily to that void, as if it were the sole reason why life was not thoroughly **joyous** to him? I suppose it is the way with all men and women who reach middle age without the clear perception that life never *can* be thoroughly joyous: under the vague **dullness** of the grey hours, dissatisfaction seeks a definite object, and finds it in the privation of an untried good. Dissatisfaction seated **musingly** on a **childless** hearth, thinks with envy of the father whose return is greeted by young voices--seated at the meal where the little heads rise one above another like nursery plants, it sees a black care hovering behind every one of them, and thinks the impulses by which men abandon freedom, and seek for ties, are surely nothing but a brief madness. In Godfrey's case there were further reasons why his thoughts should be continually **solicited** by this one point in his lot: his conscience, never thoroughly easy about Eppie, now gave his childless home the aspect of a **retribution**; and as the time passed on, under Nancy's refusal to adopt her, any retrieval of his error became more and more difficult.

On this Sunday afternoon it was already four years since there had been any **allusion** to the subject between them, and Nancy supposed that it was for ever buried.

"I wonder if he'll mind it less or more as he gets older," she thought; "I'm afraid more. Aged people feel the miss of children: what would father do without Priscilla? And if I die, Godfrey will be very lonely--not holding together with his brothers much. But I won't be over-anxious, and trying to make things out beforehand: I must do my best for the present."

With that last thought Nancy roused herself from her **reverie**, and turned her eyes again towards the forsaken page. It had been forsaken longer than she imagined, for she was presently surprised by the appearance of the servant with the tea-things. It was, in fact, a little before the usual time for tea; but Jane had her reasons.

"Is your master come into the yard, Jane?"

Thesaurus

allusion: (*n*) innuendo, reference, cue, suggestion, mention, intimation, pointer, insinuation, implication, indication, clue.
childless: (*adj*) sterile, unfruitful, issueless, infertile, bare, bereaved, bleak, unkind, unproductive, orbate.
dullness: (*n*) apathy, bluntness, boredom, dreariness, flatness, tedium, obtuseness, torpor, monotony, lethargy; (*adj, n*) phlegm. ANTONYMS: (*n*) brightness, intensity, brilliance, excitement, intelligence, shine, asperity, animation, gloss, clarity, variation.
joyous: (*adj*) happy, gleeful, elated, jolly, glad, gay, jovial, merry, festive, cheerful, jocund. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) despairing, joyless, miserable.
musingly: (*adv*) thoughtfully, ponderingly, meditatively, contemplatively, reflectively, ruminatively, broodingly, deep in thought. ANTONYM: (*adv*) unthinkingly.
retribution: (*n*) reprisal, judgment, penalty, punishment, requital, repayment, recompense, reward, revenge, retaliation, restitution. ANTONYM: (*n*) reward.
reverie: (*n*) dream, fantasy, air castle, brown study, revery, trance, abstraction, castle in Spain, castle in the air; (*adj*) preoccupation, distraction. ANTONYM: (*n*) reality.
solicited: (*adj*) requested.

"No 'm, he isn't," said Jane, with a slight emphasis, of which, however, her mistress took no notice.

"I don't know whether you've seen 'em, 'm," continued Jane, after a pause, "but there's folks making haste all one way, afore the front window. I doubt something's happened. There's niver a man to be seen i' the yard, else I'd send and see. I've been up into the top **attic**, but there's no seeing anything for **trees**. I hope nobody's hurt, that's all."

"Oh, no, I daresay there's nothing much the matter," said Nancy. "It's perhaps Mr. Snell's bull got out again, as he did before."

"I wish he mayn't **gore** anybody then, that's all," said Jane, not altogether **despising** a hypothesis which covered a few imaginary calamities.

"That girl is always **terrifying** me," thought Nancy; "I wish Godfrey would come in."

She went to the front window and looked as far as she could see along the road, with an uneasiness which she felt to be **childish**, for there were now no such signs of excitement as Jane had spoken of, and Godfrey would not be likely to return by the village road, but by the fields. She continued to stand, however, looking at the **placid churchyard** with the long shadows of the gravestones across the bright green hillocks, and at the glowing autumn colours of the Rectory trees beyond. Before such calm external beauty the presence of a vague fear is more distinctly felt--like a **raven flapping** its slow wing across the sunny air. Nancy wished more and more that Godfrey would come in.

Thesaurus

attic: (*adj*) chaste, pure, elegant, classical, correct, artistic; (*n*) cockloft, loft, clerestory, house top, upper story.
childish: (*adj*) childlike, naive, babyish, immature, simple, puerile, infantile, juvenile, silly, frivolous, young. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) sensible, old, wise, adult, jaded.
churchyard: (*n*) graveyard, burial ground, yard, necropolis, cloisters, kirkyard.
despising: (*n*) despisal, contempt, despisement; (*adj*) disdainful.
flapping: (*adj*) loose, detached, baggy, streaming, flying, slack; (*n*) fluttering, flutter, flaps, dither, disturbance.
gore: (*v*) butt, stab, spike, spear, push, stick, impale, pierce; (*n*) bloodshed, gusset, carnage.
placid: (*adj*) calm, composed, easygoing, equable, gentle, quiet, pacific, tranquil, cool, peaceable; (*adj, v*) peaceful. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) rough, energetic, stormy, frenetic, excitable, agitated, unstable, bothered, harsh, boisterous.
raven: (*v*) guttle, feed, devour, gulp, harry, eat; (*n*) crow, plunder; (*adj*) black, jet; (*n, v*) gorge.
terrifying: (*adj*) horrible, frightening, alarming, fearsome, scary, horrifying, terrific, appalling, formidable, ghastly, hideous. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) safe, pleasant, reassuring.
trees: (*n*) foliage.

CHAPTER XVIII

Someone opened the door at the other end of the room, and Nancy felt that it was her husband. She turned from the window with gladness in her eyes, for the wife's chief **dread** was stilled.

"Dear, I'm so thankful you're come," she said, going towards him. "I began to get --"

She paused abruptly, for Godfrey was laying down his hat with trembling hands, and turned towards her with a pale face and a strange unanswering glance, as if he saw her indeed, but saw her as part of a scene invisible to herself. She laid her hand on his arm, not **daring** to speak again; but he left the touch **unnoticed**, and threw himself into his chair.

Jane was already at the door with the **hissing** urn. "Tell her to keep away, will you?" said Godfrey; and when the door was closed again he exerted himself to speak more **distinctly**.

"Sit down, Nancy--there," he said, pointing to a chair opposite him. "I came back as soon as I could, to hinder anybody's telling you but me. I've had a great shock--but I care most about the shock it'll be to you."

"It isn't father and Priscilla?" said Nancy, with quivering lips, clasping her hands together tightly on her lap.

Thesaurus

daring: (*adj, n*) bold, courageous, adventurous; (*adj*) audacious, venturesome, intrepid; (*n*) bravery, audacity, boldness, courage, adventurousness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) cowardice, timidity; (*adj*) timid, cautious, dull, afraid, chicken, fearful, unadventurous, wimpy.

distinctly: (*adv*) clearly, particularly, evidently, expressly, obviously, markedly, definitely, precisely, manifestly, separately, decidedly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) inaudibly, faintly, vaguely, silently, imperceptibly, poorly.

dread: (*n, v*) apprehension, fear, panic; (*n*) anxiety, awe, consternation, alarm, trepidation, dismay, foreboding, terror. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) pleasing, welcomed, pleasant; (*v*) welcome, want; (*n*) reassurance, fearlessness, confidence, security, ease, calm.

hissing: (*adj*) sibilant, sibilous, sibilatory; (*n*) whistling, heckling, scoffing, sibilance, taunts, sibilation, white noise; (*v*) fizzle. ANTONYM: (*n*) applause.

unnoticed: (*v*) unheeded, unthought of, unregarded; (*adj*) disregarded, unmarked, hidden, neglected, ignored, obscure; (*adj, v*) unremarked, unobserved. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) evident, seen, noticeable, noted, obvious.

"No, it's nobody living," said Godfrey, unequal to the **considerate** skill with which he would have wished to make his revelation. "It's Dunstan--my brother Dunstan, that we lost sight of sixteen years ago. We've found him--found his body--his skeleton."

The deep dread Godfrey's look had created in Nancy made her feel these words a relief. She sat in comparative **calmness** to hear what else he had to tell. He went on:

"The Stone-pit has gone dry suddenly--from the draining, I suppose; and there he lies--has lain for sixteen years, **wedged** between two great stones. There's his watch and **seals**, and there's my gold-handled hunting-whip, with my name on: he took it away, without my knowing, the day he went hunting on Wildfire, the last time he was seen."

Godfrey paused: it was not so easy to say what came next. "Do you think he drowned himself?" said Nancy, almost wondering that her husband should be so deeply shaken by what had happened all those years ago to an **unloved** brother, of whom worse things had been augured.

"No, he fell in," said Godfrey, in a low but distinct voice, as if he felt some deep meaning in the fact. Presently he added: "Dunstan was the man that robbed Silas Marner."

The blood rushed to Nancy's face and neck at this surprise and shame, for she had been bred up to regard even a distant kinship with crime as a **dishonour**.

"O Godfrey!" she said, with compassion in her tone, for she had immediately reflected that the dishonour must be felt still more keenly by her husband.

"There was the money in the pit," he continued--"all the weaver's money. Everything's been gathered up, and they're taking the skeleton to the Rainbow. But I came back to tell you: there was no **hindering** it; you must know."

He was silent, looking on the ground for two long minutes. Nancy would have said some words of comfort under this disgrace, but she refrained, from an instinctive sense that there was something behind-- that Godfrey had something

Thesaurus

calmness: (*n*) calm, composure, quietness, poise, serenity, stillness, quiet, silence, placidity, peace; (*adj, n*) coolness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) anxiety, nervousness, restlessness, panic, fury, unrest, intensity, discomposure, bustle, annoyance, noise.

considerate: (*adj, n*) thoughtful, benevolent, nice, gentle, sympathetic, humane; (*adj*) magnanimous, kind, polite, delicate, discreet. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) uncaring, thoughtless, tactless, inconsiderate, selfish, rude, unkind, unforgiving, offhand, disrespectful, unsympathetic.

dishonour: (*v*) discredit, disgrace, attaint, shame, degrade, desecrate, violate, rape, outrage; (*n*) stigma, opprobrium.

hindering: (*adj*) obstructive, clogging, preclusive, meddlesome, impedimental, counter, obstruent, blocking up; (*n*) hindrance, impedition; (*v*) hinder.

seals: (*n*) Pinnipedia, key, talisman, aquatic mammal, signet, suborder Pinnipedia, sea Lions.

unloved: (*v*) unmourned; (*adj*) abhorrent, unpopular, unlamented, unbeloved, reviled, loathed, hated, disliked, detested, despicable. ANTONYM: (*adj*) loved.

wedged: (*adj*) impacted, cuneiform, jammed, fast, compacter, stuck, compact. ANTONYM: (*adj*) free.

else to tell her. Presently he lifted his eyes to her face, and kept them fixed on her, as he said--

"Everything comes to light, Nancy, sooner or later. When God Almighty wills it, our **secrets** are found out. I've lived with a secret on my mind, but I'll keep it from you no **longer**. I wouldn't have you know it by somebody else, and not by me--I wouldn't have you find it out after I'm dead. I'll tell you now. It's been "I will" and "I won't" with me all my life--I'll make sure of myself now."

Nancy's **utmost** dread had returned. The eyes of the husband and wife met with awe in them, as at a crisis which suspended affection.

"Nancy," said Godfrey, slowly, "when I married you, I hid something from you--something I ought to have told you. That woman Marner found dead in the snow--Eppie's mother--that **wretched** woman--was my wife: Eppie is my child."

He paused, dreading the effect of his **confession**. But Nancy sat quite still, only that her eyes dropped and ceased to meet his. She was pale and quiet as a **meditative** statue, clasping her hands on her lap.

"You'll never think the same of me again," said Godfrey, after a little while, with some **tremor** in his voice.

She was silent.

"I oughtn't to have left the child **unowned**: I oughtn't to have kept it from you. But I couldn't bear to give you up, Nancy. I was led away into marrying her--I suffered for it."

Still Nancy was silent, looking down; and he almost expected that she would presently get up and say she would go to her father's. How could she have any mercy for faults that must seem so black to her, with her simple, severe notions?

But at last she lifted up her eyes to his again and spoke. There was no indignation in her voice--only deep regret.

Thesaurus

confession: (*n*) admission, acknowledgment, recognition, acknowledgement, concession, divulgence, disclosure, shrift, penance, profession, admission of guilt. ANTONYMS: (*n*) disavowal, refutation.
longer: (*adj*) longest, better, lengest; (*adv*) farther; (*n*) yearner, thirster.
meditative: (*adj, v*) thoughtful, pensive; (*adj*) wistful, reflective, broody, museful, ruminative, musing, brooding; (*v*) philosophical, sedate.
secrets: (*n*) secrecy.
tremor: (*n, v*) shiver, quake, shudder, shake; (*n*) agitation, vibration, earthquake, convulsion; (*adj, v*) flutter; (*adj, n*) trepidation; (*v*) tremble.
unowned: (*adj*) ownerless, unculled, unattended, abandoned, unappropriated. ANTONYM: (*adj*) owned.
utmost: (*adj, n*) maximum, extreme, uttermost, furthermost, best, highest; (*adj, adv*) farthest; (*adj, v*) supreme; (*adj*) last, furthest; (*adj, n, v*) greatest. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) moderate, worst.
wretched: (*adj*) unfortunate, pitiful, sad, pitiable, woeful, pathetic, piteous, lamentable; (*adj, v*) poor, unhappy, forlorn. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) fine, strong, fortunate, overjoyed, nice, admirable, good, cheery, joyous, lucky, comfortable.

"Godfrey, if you had but told me this six years ago, we could have done some of our duty by the child. Do you think I'd have **refused** to take her in, if I'd known she was yours?"

At that moment Godfrey felt all the **bitterness** of an error that was not simply **futile**, but had defeated its own end. He had not measured this wife with whom he had lived so long. But she spoke again, with more agitation.

"And--Oh, Godfrey--if we'd had her from the first, if you'd taken to her as you ought, she'd have loved me for her mother--and you'd have been happier with me: I could better have bore my little baby dying, and our life might have been more like what we used to think it 'ud be."

The tears fell, and Nancy ceased to speak.

"But you wouldn't have married me then, Nancy, if I'd told you," said Godfrey, urged, in the bitterness of his self-reproach, to prove to himself that his conduct had not been **utter folly**. "You may think you would now, but you wouldn't then. With your pride and your father's, you'd have hated having anything to do with me after the talk there'd have been."

"I can't say what I should have done about that, Godfrey. I should never have married anybody else. But I wasn't worth doing wrong for-- nothing is in this world. Nothing is so good as it seems beforehand--not even our marrying wasn't, you see." There was a faint sad smile on Nancy's face as she said the last words.

"I'm a worse man than you thought I was, Nancy," said Godfrey, rather **tremulously**. "Can you **forgive** me ever?"

"The wrong to me is but little, Godfrey: you've made it up to me-- you've been good to me for fifteen years. It's another you did the wrong to; and I doubt it can never be all made up for."

"But we can take Eppie now," said Godfrey. "I won't mind the world knowing at last. I'll be plain and open for the rest o' my life."

Thesaurus

bitterness: (*n*) acerbity, animosity, gall, malice, resentment, enmity, acridity, acidity, bitter, rancor, sharpness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) joy, happiness, harmony, kindness, blandness, friendliness, goodwill, idealism, affection.

folly: (*n*) fatuity, foolishness, silliness, tomfoolery, nonsense, stupidity, craziness, density, freak; (*adj, n*) irrationality, trifling. ANTONYM: (*n*) sense.

forgive: (*v*) absolve, excuse, acquit, remit, pardon, justify, to forgive, exonerate, overlook, clear, to excuse. ANTONYMS: (*v*) condemn, punish, castigate.

futile: (*adj*) useless, empty, ineffective, frivolous, idle, abortive, bootless, hopeless, meaningless, vain, hollow. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) successful, useful, fruitful, meaningful, worthwhile, promising, productive, effective.

refused: (*adj*) forbidden, refuse, prohibited, hence.

tremulously: (*adv*) fearfully, shiveringly, tremblingly, shakingly, quiveringly, quaveringly, fidgetily, vibratingly.

utter: (*v*) say, state, speak, breathe, articulate, deliver, voice, pronounce; (*adj, n, v*) express, declare; (*adj, v*) tell. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) qualified, incomplete, uncertain, rather, slight; (*v*) conceal, hide, block.

"It'll be different coming to us, now she's **grown** up," said Nancy, **shaking** her head **sadly**. "But it's your duty to **acknowledge** her and provide for her; and I'll do my part by her, and **pray** to God Almighty to make her love me."

"Then we'll go together to Silas Marner's this very night, as soon as everything's **quiet** at the Stone-pits."

Thesaurus

acknowledge: (*v*) recognize, confess, accept, profess, own, admit, concede, appreciate, notice, declare, approve. ANTONYMS: (*v*) ignore, overlook, reject, repudiate, snub, refuse, renounce, abjure, disavow, disregard, refute.

grown: (*adj*) mature, big, growed, grown-up, developed, ripe, grownup, fully grown, full-grown, growth, become. ANTONYM: (*adj*) unripe.

pray: (*v*) beg, implore, entreat, crave, invite, plead, beseech, appeal, importune, adjure, invoke. ANTONYM: (*v*) reject.

quiet: (*adj, adv, v*) still; (*adj, n, v*) lull, hush, pacify, compose, appease, assuage; (*adj, v*) moderate, cool; (*adj, adv*) gentle, motionless. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) noisy, talkative, vociferous, active, oratorical, fierce, vocal, unquiet, busy, disordered; (*n*) noise.

sadly: (*adv*) pitifully, dolefully, unfortunately, mournfully, sorrowfully, woefully, dejectedly, pathetically, wretchedly, forlornly; (*adj, adv*) seriously. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) cheerfully, contentedly, gladly, joyfully, fortunately, luckily, enthusiastically.

shaking: (*adj, n*) quivering, tremor, jarring; (*n*) quiver, palpitation, quake; (*adj*) quaking, shaky, flutter, unsteady, shivering.

CHAPTER XIX

Between eight and nine o'clock that evening, Eppie and Silas were seated alone in the cottage. After the great excitement the weaver had undergone from the events of the afternoon, he had felt a longing for this **quietude**, and had even begged Mrs. Winthrop and Aaron, who had naturally lingered behind every one else, to leave him alone with his child. The excitement had not passed away: it had only reached that stage when the **keenness** of the **susceptibility** makes external stimulus intolerable--when there is no sense of weariness, but rather an intensity of inward life, under which sleep is an impossibility. Any one who has watched such moments in other men remembers the brightness of the eyes and the strange **definiteness** that comes over coarse features from that transient influence. It is as if a new **fineness** of ear for all spiritual voices had sent wonder-working vibrations through the heavy mortal frame--as if "beauty born of murmuring sound" had passed into the face of the listener.

Silas's face showed that sort of **transfiguration**, as he sat in his arm-chair and looked at Eppie. She had drawn her own chair towards his knees, and leaned forward, holding both his hands, while she looked up at him. On the table near them, lit by a candle, lay the recovered gold--the old long-loved gold, ranged in orderly heaps, as Silas used to range it in the days when it was his only joy. He had been telling her how he used to count it every night, and how his soul was utterly desolate till she was sent to him.

Thesaurus

definiteness: (*n*) certainty, conclusiveness, accuracy, exactness, finality, decisiveness, definition, predictability, intelligibility, resolution, expressness. ANTONYM: (*n*) uncertainty.

fineness: (*n*) refinement, elegance, daintiness, thinness, choiceness, beauty, superiority, subtlety, slimness, slenderness, narrowness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) stoutness, thickness, vulgarity, inaccuracy, coarseness, width.

keenness: (*n*) ardor, eagerness, enthusiasm, acumen, sharpness, zeal, acuity, quickness, diligence, fervor; (*n, v*) edge. ANTONYMS: (*n*) unwillingness, dullness, indifference, faintness, dislike, patience, reluctance.

quietude: (*n*) quietness, calmness, peace, composure, placidity, tranquility, repose, serenity, tranquillity, hush, silence.

susceptibility: (*n*) sensitivity, liability, impressibility, inclination, capability, sensibility, susceptibleness, receptivity, responsiveness, proclivity, tendency. ANTONYMS: (*n*) resistance, insensitivity.

transfiguration: (*n*) metamorphosis, extreme unction, conversion, canonization, subpanation, impanation, invocation of saints, seven sacraments, mutation, auricular confession, viaticum.

"At first, I'd a sort o' feeling come across me now and then," he was saying in a **subdued** tone, "as if you might be changed into the gold again; for sometimes, turn my head which way I would, I seemed to see the gold; and I thought I should be glad if I could feel it, and find it was come back. But that didn't last long. After a bit, I should have thought it was a **curse** come again, if it had drove you from me, for I'd got to feel the need o' your looks and your voice and the touch o' your little fingers. You didn't know then, Eppie, when you were such a little un--you didn't know what your old father Silas felt for you."

"But I know now, father," said Eppie. "If it hadn't been for you, they'd have taken me to the workhouse, and there'd have been nobody to love me."

"Eh, my precious child, the blessing was mine. If you hadn't been sent to save me, I should ha' gone to the grave in my misery. The money was taken away from me in time; and you see it's been kept-- kept till it was wanted for you. It's wonderful--our life is wonderful."

Silas sat in silence a few minutes, looking at the money. "It takes no hold of me now," he said, ponderingly--"the money doesn't. I wonder if it ever could again--I doubt it might, if I lost you, Eppie. I might come to think I was forsaken again, and lose the feeling that God was good to me."

At that moment there was a **knocking** at the door; and Eppie was obliged to rise without answering Silas. Beautiful she looked, with the **tenderness** of gathering tears in her eyes and a slight **flush** on her cheeks, as she **stepped** to open the door. The flush **deepened** when she saw Mr. and Mrs. Godfrey Cass. She made her little rustic curtsy, and held the door wide for them to enter.

"We're disturbing you very late, my dear," said Mrs. Cass, taking Eppie's hand, and looking in her face with an expression of anxious interest and admiration. Nancy herself was pale and **tremulous**.

Eppie, after placing chairs for Mr. and Mrs. Cass, went to stand against Silas, opposite to them.

"Well, Marner," said Godfrey, trying to speak with perfect firmness, "it's a great comfort to me to see you with your money again, that you've been

Thesaurus

curse: (*n, v*) blight, plague; (*n*) anathema, blasphemy, malediction, denunciation; (*adj, v*) beshrew; (*v*) swear, ban, damn, vituperate. ANTONYMS: (*n*) blessing, benediction, making; (*v*) communicate.

deepened: (*adj*) concentrated, gathered.

flush: (*adj, n, v*) blush, glow; (*adj*) flat, affluent, rich; (*adj, v*) even, smooth, level; (*n*) bloom; (*n, v*) color; (*v*) redden. ANTONYMS: (*n*) pallor; (*v*) blanch, blench; (*adj*) empty, low, poor.

knocking: (*n*) sound, bang, beating, hit, rap, strike, belt, criticism, bash.

stepped: (*v*) advanced, gone, stopen.

subdued: (*adj*) quiet, muffled, dull, restrained, muted, tame, faint, repressed, low, meek; (*adj, v*) resigned. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) enthusiastic, lively, uninhibited, unsubdued, rebellious, noisy, bright, elaborate, frivolous, upbeat.

tenderness: (*n*) fondness, soreness, love, affection, sympathy; (*adj, n*) clemency, mildness, compassion, gentleness, softness, delicacy. ANTONYMS: (*n*) pleasure, dryness, hatred, strength, detachment.

tremulous: (*adj*) shaky, trembling, shaking, fearful, apprehensive, quavering, fidgety, shivering; (*n*) nervous, diffident, coy. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) stable, confident, steady.

deprived of so many years. It was one of my family did you the wrong--the more grief to me--and I feel bound to make up to you for it in every way. Whatever I can do for you will be nothing but paying a debt, even if I looked no further than the **robbery**. But there are other things I'm beholden--shall be beholden to you for, Marner."

Godfrey checked himself. It had been agreed between him and his wife that the subject of his **fatherhood** should be approached very carefully, and that, if possible, the disclosure should be reserved for the future, so that it might be made to Eppie gradually. Nancy had urged this, because she felt strongly the painful light in which Eppie must inevitably see the relation between her father and mother.

Silas, always ill at ease when he was being spoken to by "betters", such as Mr. Cass--tall, powerful, **florid** men, seen **chiefly** on horseback--answered with some constraint--

"Sir, I've a deal to thank you for a'ready. As for the robbery, I count it no loss to me. And if I did, you couldn't help it: you aren't **answerable** for it."

"You may look at it in that way, Marner, but I never can; and I hope you'll let me act according to my own feeling of what's just. I know you're easily contented: you've been a **hard**-working man all your life."

"Yes, sir, yes," said Marner, meditatively. "I should ha' been bad off without my work: it was what I held by when everything else was gone from me."

"Ah," said Godfrey, **applying** Marner's words simply to his bodily **wants**, "it was a good trade for you in this country, because there's been a great deal of linen-weaving to be done. But you're getting rather past such close work, Marner: it's time you laid by and had some rest. You look a good deal pulled down, though you're not an old man, *are* you?"

"Fifty-five, as near as I can say, sir," said Silas.

"Oh, why, you may live thirty years longer--look at old Macey! And that money on the table, after all, is but little. It won't go far either way--whether it's put out to interest, or you were to live on it as long as it would last: it wouldn't

Thesaurus

answerable: (*adj, v*) amenable, liable, responsible, subject, exposed, bound; (*v*) uncommendable, exceptionable; (*adj*) conformable, adequate, responsal. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) irrefutable, unaccountable.
applying: (*adj*) applicatory, applicative.
chiefly: (*adv*) principally, primarily, above all, especially, headly, mostly, largely, primely, predominantly; (*adj, adv*) mainly, particularly. ANTONYM: (*adv*) partially.
deprived: (*adj*) bereft, poor, destitute, depressed, needy, broke, bankrupt, denuded, humble, indigent, insolvent. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) rich, exalted, salubrious.
fatherhood: (*n*) fathership, relationship, kinship, authorship, parenthood, parentage, begetter, family headship, family relationship, father, beginner.
florid: (*adj*) flamboyant, fancy, flowery, aureate, flashy, fresh, figurative, gorgeous; (*adj, v*) ornate, gaudy; (*adj, n*) ruddy. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) pale, plain.
hard-working: (*adj*) studious, industrious, painstaking, active, dedicated, tireless.
robbery: (*n*) depredation, pillage, piracy, plunder, looting, burglary, theft, holdup, thieving, freebooting; (*v*) rob.
wants: (*n*) need, necessities.

go far if you'd nobody to keep but yourself, and you've had two to keep for a good many years now."

"Eh, sir," said Silas, **unaffected** by anything Godfrey was saying, "I'm in no fear o' want. We shall do very well--Eppie and me 'ull do well enough. There's few working-folks have got so much laid by as that. I don't know what it is to gentlefolks, but I look upon it as a deal--almost too much. And as for us, it's little we want."

"Only the garden, father," said Eppie, blushing up to the ears the moment after.

"You love a garden, do you, my dear?" said Nancy, thinking that this turn in the point of view might help her husband. "We should agree in that: I give a deal of time to the garden."

"Ah, there's plenty of **gardening** at the Red House," said Godfrey, surprised at the difficulty he found in approaching a proposition which had seemed so easy to him in the distance. "You've done a good part by Eppie, Marner, for **sixteen** years. It 'ud be a great comfort to you to see her well provided for, wouldn't it? She looks **blooming** and healthy, but not fit for any **hardships**: she doesn't look like a **strapping** girl come of working parents. You'd like to see her taken care of by those who can leave her well off, and make a lady of her; she's more fit for it than for a rough life, such as she might come to have in a few years' time."

A slight flush came over Marner's face, and disappeared, like a passing **gleam**. Eppie was simply wondering Mr. Cass should talk so about things that seemed to have nothing to do with reality; but Silas was hurt and **uneasy**.

"I don't take your meaning, sir," he answered, not having words at command to express the mingled feelings with which he had heard Mr. Cass's words.

"Well, my meaning is this, Marner," said Godfrey, determined to come to the point. "Mrs. Cass and I, you know, have no children-- nobody to benefit by our good home and everything else we have-- more than enough for ourselves. And we should like to have somebody in the place of a daughter to us--we should like

Thesaurus

blooming: (*adj*) rosy, thriving, flourishing, healthy, prosperous, ruddy, booming, blossoming, cherry, verdant, green. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) arid, pale.
gardening: (*n*) cultivation, horticulture, agronomy, floriculture, agriculture, husbandry, spade husbandry, vintage, landscape gardening, flower gardening, landscaping.
gleam: (*n, v*) glance, beam, blaze, shine, glimmer, glow, flash, flicker, sparkle, glitter; (*v*) twinkle.
hardships: (*n*) difficulty.
sixteen: (*n*) large integer.
strapping: (*adj*) brawny, burly, lusty, beefy, husky, powerful, robust, hefty, stout, strong; (*n*) strap. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) puny, weak, frail, feeble, delicate, slim.
unaffected: (*adj*) sincere, artless, natural, plain, real, genuine, unimpressed, ingenuous, naive, untouched, honest. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) unnatural, sophisticated, refined, pretentious, moved, hurt, disturbed, changed, vulnerable, dishonest, emotional.
uneasy: (*adj*) anxious, fidgety, restless, concerned, nervous, apprehensive, ill at ease, unquiet, awkward, fretful, restive. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) calm, untroubled, composed, relaxed, easy, unconcerned, still, comfortable, carefree, confident, serene.

to have Eppie, and treat her in every way as our own child. It 'ud be a great comfort to you in your old age, I hope, to see her fortune made in that way, after you've been at the trouble of bringing her up so well. And it's right you should have every reward for that. And Eppie, I'm sure, will always love you and be grateful to you: she'd come and see you very often, and we should all be on the look-out to do everything we could towards making you comfortable."

A plain man like Godfrey Cass, speaking under some embarrassment, necessarily blunders on words that are coarser than his intentions, and that are likely to fall **gratingly** on **susceptible** feelings. While he had been speaking, Eppie had quietly passed her arm behind Silas's head, and let her hand rest against it caressingly: she felt him trembling **violently**. He was silent for some moments when Mr. Cass had ended--powerless under the conflict of emotions, all **alike** painful. Eppie's heart was swelling at the sense that her father was in distress; and she was just going to lean down and speak to him, when one struggling dread at last **gained** the mastery over every other in Silas, and he said, faintly--

"Eppie, my child, speak. I won't stand in your way. Thank Mr. and Mrs. Cass."

Eppie took her hand from her father's head, and came forward a step. Her cheeks were flushed, but not with **shyness** this time: the sense that her father was in doubt and suffering banished that sort of self-consciousness. She dropped a low curtsy, first to Mrs. Cass and then to Mr. Cass, and said--

"Thank you, ma'am--thank you, sir. But I can't leave my father, nor own anybody **nearer** than him. And I don't want to be a lady-- thank you all the same" (here Eppie dropped another curtsy). "I couldn't give up the folks I've been used to."

Eppie's lips began to tremble a little at the last words. She retreated to her father's chair again, and held him round the neck: while Silas, with a subdued sob, put up his hand to grasp hers.

Thesaurus

alike: (*adj*) corresponding, equal, equivalent, cognate, analogical, parallel, analogous, identical, similar, the same, duplicate. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) different, dissimilar, contrasting, unalike, disparate, unlike, opposite; (*adv*) differently, unequally, unevenly.
gained: (*adj*) extrinsic.
gratingly: (*adv*) roughly, raspingly, hoarsely, stridently, raucously, gruffly, grindingly, annoyingly, jarringly, gravelly, irksomely.
nearer: (*adj*) adjacent, narre, hither; (*adv*) more rapidly, sooner, quicker, nigher, NER, faster, earlier, Neer.
shyness: (*n*) diffidence, modesty, bashfulness, humility, shame, timidity, coyness, pudency, timorousness, backwardness, timidness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) sociability, brashness, confidence, urbanity, arrogance.
susceptible: (*adj*) impressionable, receptive, sensitive, subject, liable, delicate, susceptive, vulnerable, pliable, irritable, open. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) resistant, impervious, resisting, safe, invulnerable, indifferent, smart.
violently: (*adj, adv*) vehemently, hotly, madly, ardently; (*adv*) wildly, passionately, strongly, hard, furiously, turbulently; (*adv, n*) vigorously. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) gently, nonviolently, feebly, impassively, peacefully, tamely.

The tears were in Nancy's eyes, but her sympathy with Eppie was, naturally, divided with distress on her husband's account. She dared not speak, wondering what was going on in her husband's mind.

Godfrey felt an irritation inevitable to almost all of us when we encounter an unexpected obstacle. He had been full of his own **penitence** and resolution to retrieve his error as far as the time was left to him; he was possessed with **all**-important feelings, that were to lead to a **predetermined** course of action which he had fixed on as the right, and he was not prepared to enter with lively appreciation into other people's feelings **counteracting** his **virtuous** resolves. The agitation with which he spoke again was not quite **unmixed** with anger.

"But I've a claim on you, Eppie--the strongest of all claims. It's my duty, Marner, to own Eppie as my child, and provide for her. She is my own child--her mother was my wife. I've a natural claim on her that must stand before every other."

Eppie had given a violent start, and turned quite pale. Silas, on the contrary, who had been relieved, by Eppie's answer, from the dread lest his mind should be in opposition to hers, felt the spirit of resistance in him set free, not without a touch of parental **fierceness**. "Then, sir," he answered, with an accent of bitterness that had been silent in him since the memorable day when his youthful hope had perished--"then, sir, why didn't you say so sixteen year ago, and claim her before I'd come to love her, i'stead o' coming to take her from me now, when you might as well take the heart out o' my body? God gave her to me because you turned your back upon her, and He looks upon her as mine: you've no right to her! When a man turns a blessing from his door, it falls to them as take it in."

"I know that, Marner. I was wrong. I've repented of my conduct in that matter," said Godfrey, who could not help feeling the edge of Silas's words.

"I'm glad to hear it, sir," said Marner, with gathering excitement; "but **repentance** doesn't alter what's been going on for sixteen year. Your coming now and saying "I'm her father" doesn't alter the feelings inside us. It's me she's been calling her father ever since she could say the word."

Thesaurus

all-important: (*adj*) necessary, life-and-death, critical.
counteracting: (*adj*) antagonist, antagonistic, corrective.
fierceness: (*n*) ferocity, violence, cruelty, force, brutality, rage, intensity, strength, vehemence, wildness, ferociousness. ANTONYMS: (*n*) friendliness, calmness, meekness.
penitence: (*n*) penance, compunction, regret, contrition, remorse, rue, sorrow, atonement, grief, expiation, contriteness.
predetermined: (*adj*) preset, fixed, set, doomed, preordained, fated, appointed, black, bound, bringing death, bringing ruin. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) infinite, uncertain, variable.
repentance: (*n*) contrition, penance, remorse, regret, compunction, sorrow, guilt, contriteness, grief, attrition, atonement. ANTONYMS: (*n*) shamelessness, brazenness.
unmixed: (*adj, v*) simple, sheer, mere, downright; (*adj*) absolute, unmingled, undiluted, straight, uncompounded, single, plain. ANTONYM: (*adj*) impure.
virtuous: (*adj*) upright, pure, righteous, good, moral, just, honorable, honest, respectable, decent, pious. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) bad, sinful, corrupt, impure, unethical, decadent, degenerate, irreverent.

"But I think you might look at the thing more reasonably, Marner," said Godfrey, unexpectedly **awed** by the weaver's direct truth-speaking. "It isn't as if she was to be taken quite away from you, so that you'd never see her again. She'll be very near you, and come to see you very often. She'll feel just the same towards you."

"Just the same?" said Marner, more bitterly than ever. "How'll she feel just the same for me as she does now, when we eat o' the same bit, and drink o' the same cup, and think o' the same things from one day's end to another? Just the same? that's idle talk. You'd cut us i' two."

Godfrey, unqualified by experience to **discern** the pregnancy of Marner's simple words, felt rather angry again. It seemed to him that the weaver was very selfish (a judgment readily passed by those who have never tested their own power of sacrifice) to oppose what was undoubtedly for Eppie's welfare; and he felt himself called upon, for her sake, to **assert** his authority.

"I should have thought, Marner," he said, severely--"I should have thought your affection for Eppie would make you **rejoice** in what was for her good, even if it did call upon you to give up something. You ought to remember your own life's uncertain, and she's at an age now when her lot may soon be fixed in a way very different from what it would be in her father's home: she may marry some low working-man, and then, whatever I might do for her, I couldn't make her **well**-off. You're putting yourself in the way of her welfare; and though I'm sorry to hurt you after what you've done, and what I've left **undone**, I feel now it's my duty to insist on taking care of my own daughter. I want to do my duty."

It would be difficult to say whether it were Silas or Eppie that was more deeply stirred by this last speech of Godfrey's. Thought had been very busy in Eppie as she listened to the contest between her old long-loved father and this new unfamiliar father who had suddenly come to fill the place of that black **featureless** shadow which had held the ring and placed it on her mother's finger. Her imagination had darted backward in conjectures, and forward in previsions, of what this revealed fatherhood implied; and there were words in Godfrey's last speech which helped to make the previsions especially definite. Not that these

Thesaurus

assert: (*v*) allege, affirm, say, claim, declare, swear, show, avow, aver, maintain, argue. ANTONYMS: (*v*) reject, controvert, repress, refute.
awed: (*adj*) frightened, groveling, reverential, reverent, overwhelmed, overcome, intimidated, worshipful, impressed, fearful, abominable. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) unawed, irreverent.
discern: (*v*) differentiate, see, comprehend, detect, distinguish, make out, perceive, find, note; (*n, v*) descry; (*adj, v*) recognize. ANTONYMS: (*v*) Miss, neglect, disregard, observe, overlook.
featureless: (*adj*) lackluster, plain, monotonous, indistinctive, uninteresting, colorless, characterless, mediocre, unoriginal, uninspired, unimaginative. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) imaginative, inspired, interesting, distinctive.
rejoice: (*v*) cheer, gladden, triumph, revel, jubilate, gratify, gloat, please; (*n, v*) delight, glory, joy. ANTONYMS: (*v*) lament, mourn, complain.
undone: (*adj*) ruined, unfinished, sunk, done for, finished, behindhand, decayed; (*adj, v*) doomed; (*v*) accursed, to be pitied, devoted.
well-off: (*adj*) rich, affluent, prosperous, opulent, substantial, moneyed, flush, snug, comfortable, fortunate.

thoughts, either of past or future, determined her resolution--*that* was determined by the feelings which vibrated to every word Silas had uttered; but they raised, even apart from these feelings, a repulsion towards the offered lot and the newly-revealed father.

Silas, on the other hand, was again stricken in conscience, and alarmed lest Godfrey's accusation should be true--lest he should be raising his own will as an obstacle to Eppie's good. For many moments he was mute, struggling for the self-conquest necessary to the uttering of the difficult words. They came out tremulously.

"I'll say no more. Let it be as you will. Speak to the child. I'll hinder nothing."

Even Nancy, with all the acute **sensibility** of her own affections, shared her husband's view, that Marner was not **justifiable** in his wish to retain Eppie, after her real father had **avowed** himself. She felt that it was a very hard trial for the poor weaver, but her code allowed no question that a father by blood must have a claim above that of any foster-father. Besides, Nancy, used all her life to **plenteous** circumstances and the privileges of "respectability", could not enter into the pleasures which early **nurture** and habit connect with all the little aims and efforts of the poor who are born poor: to her mind, Eppie, in being restored to her birthright, was entering on a too long withheld but **unquestionable** good. Hence she heard Silas's last words with relief, and thought, as Godfrey did, that their wish was achieved.

"Eppie, my dear," said Godfrey, looking at his daughter, not without some embarrassment, under the sense that she was old enough to judge him, "it'll always be our wish that you should show your love and gratitude to one who's been a father to you so many years, and we shall want to help you to make him comfortable in every way. But we hope you'll come to love us as well; and though I haven't been what a father should ha' been to you all these years, I wish to do the utmost in my power for you for the rest of my life, and provide for you as my only child. And you'll have the best of mothers in my wife--that'll be a blessing you haven't known since you were old enough to know it."

Thesaurus

avowed: (*adj*) acknowledged, attested, ostensible, sworn, stated, confirmed, declared, pretended, known, authenticated, apparent.

justifiable: (*adj*) legitimate, defensible, excusable, lawful, logical, legal, reasonable, admissible, rightful, warrantable, sound. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) inexcusable, unreasonable, invalid, gratuitous, unjustifiable, illogical, unlawful, unworthy, untenable.

nurture: (*v*) foster, cherish, bring up, grow, nourish, care, maintain, educate, nurse; (*n*) education, breeding. ANTONYMS: (*n, v*) neglect.

plenteous: (*adj*) abundant, ample, copious, plentiful, bountiful, fertile, fruitful, full, exuberant, rich, generous. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) meager, sparse.

sensibility: (*adj, n, v*) feeling, notion; (*n, v*) sensation, appreciation, sense; (*n*) emotion, sensitivity, consciousness, perceptivity, awareness; (*adj, n*) sentiment. ANTONYM: (*n*) insensitivity.

unquestionable: (*adj*) incontrovertible, indisputable, sure, incontestable, indubitable, certain, unequivocal, irrefutable, undoubted, definite; (*v*) unimpeachable. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) dubious, uncertain, doubtful, indefinite, tenuous, provisional, debatable, disputable.

"My dear, you'll be a **treasure** to me," said Nancy, in her gentle voice. "We shall want for nothing when we have our daughter."

Eppie did not come forward and curtsy, as she had done before. She held Silas's hand in hers, and grasped it firmly--it was a weaver's hand, with a **palm** and finger-tips that were sensitive to such pressure--while she spoke with colder decision than before.

"Thank you, ma'am--thank you, sir, for your offers--they're very great, and far above my wish. For I should have no delight i' life any more if I was forced to go away from my father, and knew he was sitting at home, a-thinking of me and feeling lone. We've been used to be happy together every day, and I can't think o' no happiness without him. And he says he'd nobody i' the world till I was sent to him, and he'd have nothing when I was gone. And he's took care of me and loved me from the first, and I'll **cleave** to him as long as he lives, and nobody shall ever come between him and me."

"But you must make sure, Eppie," said Silas, in a low voice-- "you must make sure as you won't ever be sorry, because you've made your choice to stay among poor folks, and with poor clothes and things, when you might ha' had everything o' the best."

His **sensitiveness** on this point had increased as he listened to Eppie's words of faithful affection.

"I can never be sorry, father," said Eppie. "I shouldn't know what to think on or to wish for with fine things about me, as I haven't been used to. And it 'ud be poor work for me to put on things, and ride in a gig, and sit in a place at church, as 'ud make them as I'm fond of think me unfitting company for 'em. What could *I* care for then?"

Nancy looked at Godfrey with a **pained questioning** glance. But his eyes were fixed on the floor, where he was moving the end of his stick, as if he were **pondering** on something absently. She thought there was a word which might perhaps come better from her lips than from his.

Thesaurus

cleave: (*adj, v*) adhere, cohere; (*v*) split, divide, burst, stick, tear, sever, rive, cling, break. ANTONYMS: (*v*) forsake, abandon, meld, relinquish, separate, unite, attach.
pained: (*adj*) offended, aggrieved, distressed, displeased, sore, grieved, miserable, injured, wounded, worried, upset. ANTONYM: (*adj*) unaffected.
palm: (*n*) medal, decoration, prize, palm tree, victory, thenar, laurel wreath; (*v*) filch, cabbage, rob; (*adj*) totipalmate.
pondering: (*adj*) pensive, musing, meditative, contemplative, thoughtful, reflective; (*n*) consideration, deliberation, cogitation, reflection, lucubration.
questioning: (*adj*) inquisitive, curious, suspicious, quizzical, doubting; (*n*) question, inquiry, query, examination, interrogation, enquiry. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) illogical, certain, credulous.
sensitiveness: (*n*) sensitivity, susceptibility, antenna, sensibleness, feeler, responsiveness, keenness, sensation, acumen; (*adj*) softness, delicacy.
treasure: (*n*) gem, fortune, riches, funds; (*n, v*) hoard, prize, store; (*v*) cherish, appreciate; (*adj, n*) jewel, precious stone. ANTONYMS: (*v*) dislike, disparage, scorn, neglect; (*n*) dud, poverty.

"What you say is natural, my dear child--it's natural you should **cling** to those who've brought you up," she said, mildly; "but there's a duty you owe to your **lawful** father. There's perhaps something to be given up on more sides than one. When your father opens his home to you, I think it's right you shouldn't turn your back on it."

"I can't feel as I've got any father but one," said Eppie, impetuously, while the tears gathered. "I've always thought of a little home where he'd sit i' the corner, and I should fend and do everything for him: I can't think o' no other home. I wasn't brought up to be a lady, and I can't turn my mind to it. I like the working-folks, and their victuals, and their ways. And," she ended **passionately**, while the tears fell, "I'm promised to marry a working-man, as'll live with father, and help me to take care of him."

Godfrey looked up at Nancy with a flushed face and **smarting dilated** eyes. This frustration of a purpose towards which he had set out under the exalted consciousness that he was about to compensate in some **degree** for the greatest **demerit** of his life, made him feel the air of the room stifling.

"Let us go," he said, in an under-tone.

"We won't talk of this any longer now," said Nancy, rising. "We're your well-wishers, my dear--and yours too, Marner. We shall come and see you again. It's getting late now."

In this way she covered her husband's **abrupt** departure, for Godfrey had gone straight to the door, unable to say more.

Thesaurus

abrupt: (*adj*) sudden, brusque, sharp, precipitous, steep, instantaneous, unexpected, swift, instant, hasty; (*n*) bold. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) gentle, gradual, rambling, gracious, courteous, polite, anticipated, kind, calm, protracted, deliberate.
cling: (*v*) adhere, cleave, stick, cohere, hang, attach, grasp, adjoin, clutch, grip, hold. ANTONYMS: (*v*) detach, repel, unfasten.
degree: (*n*) extent, level, condition, title, rank, academic degree, place, caliber, status, stair; (*adj, n*) order.
demerit: (*n*) defect, fault, deficiency, shortcoming, sin, vice, insufficiency, imperfection, drawback, weak point; (*n, v*) break. ANTONYM: (*n*) merit.
dilated: (*adj*) wide, inflated, ampulliform.
lawful: (*adj*) legal, just, rightful, constitutional, true, right, justifiable, licit, regular; (*n, v*) allowable; (*adj, v*) permissible. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) unlawful, prohibited, unconstitutional.
passionately: (*adv*) fervently, vehemently, violently, fiercely, eagerly, zealously, fervidly, fierily, enthusiastically, heatedly, stormily. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) mildly, apathetically, calmly, halfheartedly, impassively, jokingly, gently.
smarting: (*adj*) painful, burning, sore; (*n*) ache, pain, hurting, bite, throbbing, hurt, soreness, sting.

CHAPTER XX

Nancy and Godfrey walked home under the starlight in silence. When they entered the oaken parlour, Godfrey threw himself into his chair, while Nancy laid down her bonnet and **shawl**, and stood on the hearth near her husband, unwilling to leave him even for a few minutes, and yet fearing to utter any word lest it might jar on his feeling. At last Godfrey turned his head towards her, and their eyes met, **dwelling** in that meeting without any movement on either side. That quiet mutual gaze of a **trusting** husband and wife is like the first moment of rest or **refuge** from a great weariness or a great danger--not to be interfered with by speech or action which would **distract** the **sensations** from the fresh enjoyment of repose.

But presently he put out his hand, and as Nancy placed hers within it, he **drew** her towards him, and said--

"That's ended!"

She bent to kiss him, and then said, as she stood by his side, "Yes, I'm afraid we must give up the hope of having her for a daughter. It wouldn't be right to want to force her to come to us against her will. We can't alter her bringing up and what's come of it."

"No," said Godfrey, with a keen **decisiveness** of tone, in contrast with his usually careless and **unemphatic** speech--"there's debts we can't pay like money

Thesaurus

decisiveness: (*n*) conclusiveness, resolve, firmness, resolution, determination, finality, definiteness, resoluteness, rigidity, sense of purpose, strength of will. ANTONYMS: (*n*) uncertainty, indecisiveness, doubt, inconclusiveness, weakness.

distract: (*adj, v*) confuse, bewilder; (*v*) disorder, ail, disturb, deflect, craze, disquiet, molest, annoy, agitate. ANTONYMS: (*v*) center, explain, concentrate, clarify.

drew: (*n*) move, John Drew.

dwelling: (*n*) domicile, home, residence, house, place, accommodation, address, building, lodge, habitation; (*adj, n*) dwell.

refuge: (*n*) sanctuary, asylum, safety, retreat, cover, harborage, haven, shelter, harbor; (*n, v*) recourse, resort.

sensations: (*n*) feelings, vibrations, ambiance.

shawl: (*n*) wrap, mantle, cape, muffler, scarf, pall, mantlet Mantua, wrapper, kerchief, headscarf, stole.

trusting: (*adj*) credulous, unsuspecting, naive, confident, confiding, simple, innocent, gullible, reliant, give, easy to fool. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) distrustful, suspicious, doubtful, hesitant, protective, shrewd, disingenuous, smart, jaded.

unemphatic: (*adj*) nonemphatical, unaccented.

debts, by paying extra for the years that have slipped by. While I've been putting off and putting off, the trees have been growing--it's too late now. Marner was in the right in what he said about a man's turning away a blessing from his door: it **falls** to somebody else. I wanted to pass for childless once, Nancy--I shall pass for childless now against my wish."

Nancy did not speak immediately, but after a little while she asked-- "You won't make it known, then, about Eppie's being your daughter?"

"No: where would be the good to anybody?--only harm. I must do what I can for her in the state of life she chooses. I must see who it is she's thinking of marrying."

"If it won't do any good to make the thing known," said Nancy, who thought she might now allow herself the relief of **entertaining** a feeling which she had tried to silence before, "I should be very thankful for father and Priscilla never to be troubled with knowing what was done in the past, more than about Dunsey: it can't be helped, their knowing that."

"I shall put it in my will--I think I shall put it in my will. I shouldn't like to leave anything to be found out, like this of Dunsey," said Godfrey, meditatively. "But I can't see anything but difficulties that 'ud come from telling it now. I must do what I can to make her happy in her own way. I've a notion," he added, after a moment's pause, "it's Aaron Winthrop she meant she was engaged to. I remember seeing him with her and Marner going away from church."

"Well, he's very sober and industrious," said Nancy, trying to view the matter as **cheerfully** as possible.

Godfrey fell into **thoughtfulness** again. Presently he looked up at Nancy **sorrowfully**, and said--

"She's a very pretty, nice girl, isn't she, Nancy?"

"Yes, dear; and with just your hair and eyes: I wondered it had never struck me before."

"I think she took a dislike to me at the thought of my being her father: I could see a change in her manner after that."

Thesaurus

cheerfully: (*adj, adv*) gladly; (*adv, v*) happily; (*adv*) merrily, readily, brightly, jovially, cheerily, genially, chirpily, lively, blithely. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) bleakly, dismally, grimly, sullenly, unhappily, somberly, sadly, grudgingly, gloomily, dourly, forlornly.

debts: (*n*) amount overdue, amount outstanding. ANTONYM: (*n*) credit.

entertaining: (*adj*) enjoyable, fun, funny, diverting, witty, merry, comical, laughable, convivial, humorous, droll. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) dull, boring, heavy, slow, tiresome, tiring, unentertaining.

falls: (*n*) cataract, waterfall, chute, angel, torrent, Victoria, twin, force, body of water, Guaira, Niagara.

sorrowfully: (*adv*) dolefully, mournfully, gloomily, woefully, unhappily, sorrily, ruefully, dejectedly, grievously, forlornly, contritely. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) happily, unrepentantly, joyfully, cheerfully.

thoughtfulness: (*n*) kindness, tact, deliberation, attentiveness, contemplativeness, attention, introspection, meditation, pensiveness, reflection, reflexion. ANTONYMS: (*n*) thoughtlessness, carelessness, cruelty, rashness, unthoughtfulness, inconsideration, unkindness, selfishness, insensitivity, neglect, cheerfulness.

"She couldn't bear to think of not looking on Marner as her father," said Nancy, not **wishing** to confirm her husband's painful impression.

"She thinks I did wrong by her mother as well as by her. She thinks me worse than I am. But she *must* think it: she can never know all. It's part of my punishment, Nancy, for my daughter to **dislike** me. I should never have got into that trouble if I'd been true to you--if I hadn't been a fool. I'd no right to expect anything but evil could come of that marriage--and when I shirked doing a father's part too."

Nancy was silent: her spirit of **rectitude** would not let her try to soften the edge of what she felt to be a just compunction. He spoke again after a little while, but the tone was rather changed: there was tenderness mingled with the previous self-reproach.

"And I got *you*, Nancy, in spite of all; and yet I've been **grumbling** and uneasy because I hadn't something else--as if I **deserved** it."

"You've never been wanting to me, Godfrey," said Nancy, with quiet **sincerity**. "My only trouble would be gone if you resigned yourself to the lot that's been given us."

"Well, perhaps it isn't too late to mend a bit there. Though it *is* too late to mend some things, say what they will."

Thesaurus

deserved: (*v*) merited, richly deserved; (*adj*) appropriate, due, fitting, just, earned, suitable, rightful, adequate, required.

dislike: (*n*) disapproval, disaffection, antipathy, disdain, disfavor, revulsion; (*n, v*) hate, disinclination, aversion, distaste; (*v*) detest. ANTONYMS: (*n*) liking, fondness, taste, attraction, enjoyment, preference, longing; (*v*) like, enjoy, approve, adore.

grumbling: (*n*) grumble, growling, murmur, murmuring, mutter, muttering; (*adj, n*) rumbling; (*adv*) grumblingly; (*adj*) grouchy, grumpy, irritable.

rectitude: (*adj, n*) justice, honesty, equity; (*n*) integrity, veracity, virtue, uprightness, morality, purity, propriety; (*adj*) fidelity. ANTONYMS: (*n*) immorality, incorrectness, wickedness.

sincerity: (*adj, n*) candor, honesty, integrity, probity, faithfulness; (*n*) earnestness, heartiness, genuineness, candour, frankness, cordiality. ANTONYMS: (*n*) dishonesty, hypocrisy, flippancy, frivolity, affectedness, caution, reticence, deceit, doubt.

wishing: (*n*) wish, want, velleity, option, need, privation, lack, deprivation, deficiency, choice; (*adj*) desirous.

CHAPTER XXI

The next morning, when Silas and Eppie were seated at their breakfast, he said to her--

"Eppie, there's a thing I've had on my mind to do this two year, and now the money's been brought back to us, we can do it. I've been turning it over and over in the night, and I think we'll set out to-morrow, while the fine days last. We'll leave the house and everything for your godmother to take care on, and we'll make a little **bundle** o' things and set out."

"Where to go, daddy?" said Eppie, in much surprise.

"To my old country--to the town where I was born--up Lantern Yard. I want to see Mr. Paston, the minister: something may ha' come out to make 'em know I was innicent o' the robbery. And Mr. Paston was a man with a deal o' light--I want to speak to him about the **drawing** o' the lots. And I should like to talk to him about the **religion** o' this country-side, for I partly think he doesn't know on it."

Eppie was very joyful, for there was the **prospect** not only of wonder and **delight** at seeing a strange country, but also of coming back to tell Aaron all about it. Aaron was so much wiser than she was about most things--it would be rather **pleasant** to have this little advantage over him. Mrs. Winthrop, though **possessed** with a dim fear of dangers attendant on so long a journey, and

Thesaurus

bundle: (*n, v*) pack, cluster, clump, wad; (*n*) sheaf, pile, batch, stack, package, group, heap. ANTONYMS: (*v*) scatter, separate, disperse, divide.
delight: (*n*) joy, pleasure, amusement, rejoicing, gladness; (*v*) ravish, amuse, please, captivate, transport, enrapture. ANTONYMS: (*n*) misery, dismay, dissatisfaction, sadness, nuisance, discontent; (*v*) depress, displease, sadden, irk; (*n, v*) bore.
drawing: (*n*) draft, delineation, picture, plan, cartoon, depiction, draught, draw, draftsmanship, painting, image.
pleasant: (*adj*) jolly, amiable, agreeable, acceptable, nice, charming, kindly, facetious, joyful, pretty; (*adj, v*) pleasing. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) disgusting, horrible, repugnant, nasty, gruesome, unwelcome, harsh, shocking, disagreeable, foul, terrible.
possessed: (*adj*) mad, obsessed, frantic, hysterical, furious, fanatical, infatuated, insane; (*v*) ought, owed, behoove. ANTONYM: (*adj*) uninterested.
prospect: (*n*) outlook, expectancy, lookout, aspect, anticipation, hope, possibility, perspective, probability, panorama, picture.
religion: (*n*) piety, faith, creed, cult, sect, denomination, church, devotion, paganism, persuasion, holiness.

requiring many assurances that it would not take them out of the region of carriers' carts and slow waggons, was nevertheless well pleased that Silas should **revisit** his own country, and find out if he had been cleared from that false accusation.

"You'd be easier in your mind for the rest o' your life, Master Marner," said Dolly--"that you would. And if there's any light to be got up the yard as you talk on, we've need of it i' this world, and I'd be glad on it myself, if you could bring it back."

So on the fourth day from that time, Silas and Eppie, in their Sunday clothes, with a small bundle tied in a blue **linen handkerchief**, were making their way through the streets of a great manufacturing town. Silas, **bewildered** by the changes thirty years had brought over his native place, had stopped several persons in succession to ask them the name of this town, that he might be sure he was not under a mistake about it.

"Ask for Lantern Yard, father--ask this gentleman with the tassels on his shoulders a-standing at the shop door; he isn't in a hurry like the rest," said Eppie, in some distress at her father's bewilderment, and ill at ease, besides, amidst the noise, the movement, and the **multitude** of strange **indifferent** faces.

"Eh, my child, he won't know anything about it," said Silas; "gentlefolks didn't ever go up the Yard. But happen somebody can tell me which is the way to Prison Street, where the jail is. I know the way out o' that as if I'd seen it yesterday."

With some difficulty, after many turnings and new inquiries, they reached Prison Street; and the grim walls of the jail, the first object that answered to any image in Silas's memory, cheered him with the **certitude**, which no assurance of the town's name had hitherto given him, that he was in his native place.

"Ah," he said, drawing a long breath, "there's the jail, Eppie; that's just the same: I aren't afraid now. It's the third turning on the left hand from the jail doors--that's the way we must go."

Thesaurus

bewildered: (*adj*) bemused, confused, confounded, perplexed, befuddled, puzzled, dumbfounded, taken aback, addled, disoriented; (*adj, v*) lost. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) unimpressed, clear, oriented, precise, understanding, alert.

certitude: (*n*) assurance, trust, conviction, determination, persuasion, faith, security, firmness, assuredness, resolution, confidence. ANTONYM: (*n*) indecision.

handkerchief: (*n*) hankie, kerchief, bandanna, cravat, hanky, wipe, bandana, collar, shawl; (*n, v*) napkin; (*v*) sudary.

indifferent: (*adj*) apathetic, impassive, cold, cool, callous, fair, insensible, unconcerned, careless, dull, average. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) enthusiastic, fervent, keen, obsessive, energetic, eager, involved, surprised, exceptional, concerned, shocked.

linen: (*n*) fabric, flax, lingerie, doily, doyley, doyly, cambric, underwear, underclothes, hemp; (*v*) muslin.

multitude: (*n*) flock, horde, crowd, host, throng, concourse, mob, masses, mass, herd, swarm. ANTONYM: (*n*) trickle.

revisit: (*v*) go back, get back, frequent, come back, review, revise, flood back, return to, go home, hang around in, have a second look at. ANTONYM: (*v*) depart.

"Oh, what a dark ugly place!" said Eppie. "How it hides the sky! It's worse than the Workhouse. I'm glad you don't live in this town now, father. Is Lantern Yard like this street?"

"My precious child," said Silas, smiling, "it isn't a big street like this. I never was easy i' this street myself, but I was fond o' Lantern Yard. The shops here are all altered, I think--I can't make 'em out; but I shall know the turning, because it's the third."

"Here it is," he said, in a tone of satisfaction, as they came to a narrow **alley**. "And then we must go to the left again, and then straight for'ard for a bit, up Shoe Lane: and then we shall be at the entry next to the o'erhanging window, where there's the nick in the road for the water to run. Eh, I can see it all."

"O father, I'm like as if I was stifled," said Eppie. "I couldn't ha' thought as any folks lived i' this way, so close together. How pretty the Stone-pits 'ull look when we get back!"

"It looks **comical** to *me*, child, now--and smells bad. I can't think as it usened to smell so."

Here and there a sallow, **begrimed** face looked out from a gloomy doorway at the strangers, and increased Eppie's uneasiness, so that it was a longed-for relief when they issued from the alleys into Shoe Lane, where there was a broader strip of sky.

"Dear heart!" said Silas, "why, there's people coming out o' the Yard as if they'd been to chapel at this time o' day--a **weekday** noon!"

Suddenly he started and stood still with a look of **distressed amazement**, that alarmed Eppie. They were before an opening in front of a large factory, from which men and women were **streaming** for their midday meal.

"Father," said Eppie, clasping his arm, "what's the matter?"

But she had to speak again and again before Silas could answer her.

"It's gone, child," he said, at last, in strong agitation-- "Lantern Yard's gone. It must ha' been here, because here's the house with the o'erhanging window--I

Thesaurus

alley: (*n*) track, road, passage, lane, alleyway, aisle, path, runway, pathway, street, back street.
amazement: (*n*) admiration, wonder, surprise, consternation, stupefaction, stupor, wonderment, feeling, alarm, jolt; (*v*) amaze. ANTONYMS: (*n*) preparation, indifference, expectation, coolness, cool, composure, calmness, contempt, belief.
begrimed: (*adj*) grubby, dirty, besmirched, unclean, raunchy, discolored, grungy, filthy, stained, dingy, soiled. ANTONYM: (*adj*) clean.
comical: (*adj*) funny, comic, laughable, absurd, humorous, ridiculous, zany, droll, jocose, grotesque, jocular. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) tragic, sad, grave, solemn, unfunny, dull, sensible.
distressed: (*adj*) worried, distraught, anxious, sad, disturbed, downcast, hurt, distracted, wretched, shocked, troubled. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) composed, content, euphoric, happy, comforted, glad, joyful, collected, unconcerned, unaffected.
streaming: (*adj*) flowing, flapping, detached, incoherent, baggy, slack, relaxed, loose, lax; (*n*) cyclosis; (*v*) disheveled.
weekday: (*n*) working day, Tuesday, sat, Saturday, day of the week, feria, Th, Friday, Thursday, Monday; (*adj*) ferial.

know that--it's just the same; but they've made this new **opening**; and see that big **factory**! It's all gone--chapel and all."

"Come into that little brush-shop and sit down, father--they'll let you sit down," said Eppie, always on the watch lest one of her father's strange attacks should come on. "Perhaps the people can tell you all about it."

But neither from the brush-maker, who had come to Shoe Lane only ten years ago, when the factory was already built, nor from any other source within his reach, could Silas learn anything of the old Lantern Yard friends, or of Mr. Paston the minister.

"The old place is all swep' away," Silas said to Dolly Winthrop on the night of his return--"the little **graveyard** and everything. The old home's gone; I've no home but this now. I shall never know whether they got at the truth o' the robbery, nor whether Mr. Paston could ha' given me any light about the drawing o' the **lots**. It's dark to me, Mrs. Winthrop, that is; I doubt it'll be dark to the last."

"Well, yes, Master Marner," said Dolly, who sat with a placid **listening** face, now **bordered** by grey **hairs**; "I doubt it may. It's the will o' Them above as a many things should be dark to us; but there's some things as I've never felt i' the dark about, and they're **mostly** what comes i' the day's work. You were hard done by that once, Master Marner, and it seems as you'll never know the rights of it; but that doesn't hinder there *being* a rights, Master Marner, for all it's dark to you and me."

"No," said Silas, "no; that doesn't hinder. Since the time the child was sent to me and I've come to love her as myself, I've had light enough to trusten by; and now she says she'll never leave me, I think I shall trusten **till** I die."

Thesaurus

bordered: (*adj*) fringed, edged, delimited, surrounded.
factory: (*n*) plant, mill, works, shop, business, cannery, establishment, studio, workshop, yard, manufacturing plant.
graveyard: (*n*) burial ground, churchyard, necropolis, burying ground, burial site, site, burial place, radioactive cemetery, memorial park, morgue.
hairs: (*n*) hair.
listening: (*v*) listen, hear, obey; (*n*) auscultation, perception, sensing, audition, audience, earshot, auditory modality; (*adj*) attentive.
lots: (*adj, n*) plenty, heaps; (*adj*) a lot, galore; (*n*) many, scores, scads, oodles, much, masses; (*adv*) a great deal. ANTONYM: (*n*) few.
mostly: (*adv*) generally, chiefly, for the most part, ordinarily, in general, above all, mainly, primarily, principally, more often than not, by and large. ANTONYM: (*adv*) partially.
opening: (*n*) gap, break, aperture, beginning, door, commencement, entrance, hole, occasion, cleft; (*adj, n*) preliminary. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) final, last; (*adj, n*) closing; (*n*) exit, finale, finish, ending, shutting, postscript, conclusion.
till: (*conj, prep*) until, unto; (*v*) plow, hoe, farm, dig; (*adj*) up to; (*n*) tiller, drawer; (*adv*) so far; (*prep*) to.

CONCLUSION

There was one time of the year which was held in Raveloe to be especially suitable for a wedding. It was when the great **lilacs** and laburnums in the old-fashioned gardens showed their golden and purple wealth above the lichen-tinted walls, and when there were calves still young enough to want bucketfuls of **fragrant** milk. People were not so busy then as they must become when the full cheese-making and the mowing had set in; and besides, it was a time when a light **bridal** dress could be worn with comfort and seen to advantage.

Happily the sunshine fell more **warmly** than usual on the lilac tufts the morning that Eppie was married, for her dress was a very light one. She had often thought, though with a feeling of renunciation, that the perfection of a wedding-dress would be a white cotton, with the **tiniest** pink **sprig** at wide intervals; so that when Mrs. Godfrey Cass begged to provide one, and asked Eppie to choose what it should be, previous **meditation** had enabled her to give a decided answer at once.

Seen at a little distance as she walked across the churchyard and down the village, she seemed to be attired in pure white, and her hair looked like the dash of gold on a lily. One hand was on her husband's arm, and with the other she clasped the hand of her father Silas.

Thesaurus

bridal: (*adj, v*) spousal; (*adj, n*) wedding; (*n*) nuptials, matrimony, espousal, hymen, marriage ceremony, adoption, betrothal; (*v*) hymeneal; (*adj*) marriage. ANTONYM: (*adj*) unmarried.

fragrant: (*adj*) spicy, odorous, balmy, sweet, odorant, scented, redolent, savory, fragrance, odoriferous, scent. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) smelly, putrid, malodorous, odorless.

lilac: (*adj*) lavender, mauve, purple, violet, puce, chromatic; (*n*) shrub, heliotrope, ash, common lilac, family Oleaceae.

meditation: (*n, v*) contemplation, study; (*n*) consideration, reflection, deliberation, thought, introspection, musing, rumination, conception, reflexion. ANTONYM: (*n*) distraction.

sprig: (*n*) branch, scion, twig, spray, bough, limb, sprout, staff, shillelah, bludgeon, brier.

tiniest: (*adj*) minimum, smallest possible, least possible, lowest, lowest possible, smallest. ANTONYM: (*adj*) maximum.

warmly: (*adv*) cordially, ardently, hotly, genially, affectionately, vigorously, fervently, zealously, eagerly, strongly, pleasantly. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) coolly, inhospitably, sourly, disagreeably, indifferently, frostily, roughly, rudely, apathetically.

"You won't be giving me away, father," she had said before they went to church; "you'll only be taking Aaron to be a son to you."

Dolly Winthrop walked behind with her husband; and there **ended** the little bridal procession.

There were many eyes to look at it, and Miss Priscilla Lammeter was glad that she and her father had happened to drive up to the door of the Red House just in time to see this pretty sight. They had come to keep Nancy company to-day, because Mr. Cass had had to go away to Lytherley, for special reasons. That seemed to be a **pity**, for otherwise he might have gone, as Mr. Crackenthorp and Mr. Osgood certainly would, to look on at the wedding-feast which he had ordered at the Rainbow, naturally feeling a great interest in the weaver who had been **wronged** by one of his own family.

"I could ha' wished Nancy had had the luck to find a child like that and bring her up," said Priscilla to her father, as they sat in the gig; "I should ha' had something young to think of then, **besides** the lambs and the calves."

"Yes, my dear, yes," said Mr. Lammeter; "one feels that as one gets older. Things look dim to old folks: they'd need have some young eyes about 'em, to let 'em know the world's the same as it used to be."

Nancy came out now to welcome her father and sister; and the wedding group had passed on beyond the Red House to the humbler part of the village.

Dolly Winthrop was the first to **divine** that old Mr. Macey, who had been set in his arm-chair outside his own door, would expect some special notice as they passed, since he was too old to be at the wedding-feast.

"Mr. Macey's looking for a word from us," said Dolly; "he'll be hurt if we pass him and say nothing--and him so **racked** with rheumatiz."

So they turned aside to **shake** hands with the old man. He had looked forward to the **occasion**, and had his premeditated speech.

"Well, Master Marner," he said, in a voice that quavered a good deal, "I've lived to see my words come true. I was the first to say there was no harm in you, though your looks might be again' you; and I was the first to say you'd get your

Thesaurus

besides: (*adv*) as well, moreover, too, furthermore, again, as well as, anyway, additionally; (*prep*) apart from, beside; (*adj, adv*) more.
divine: (*adj*) sacred, wonderful, blessed, holy, exquisite; (*n*) clergyman; (*v*) guess, conjecture, augur, anticipate; (*adj, n*) almighty. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) imperfect, profane, earthly, dreadful, physical, ugly, secular.
dolly: (*n*) puppet, plaything, cart, tripod Dolly, bird, bobbin, punch, chick, conveyance, crab Dolly; (*adv*) puppetly.
ended: (*adj*) concluded, finished, over, done, completed, closed, through, terminated, consummate, all over; (*adj, v*) past.
occasion: (*n, v*) cause; (*n*) case, event, juncture, episode, incident; (*v*) bring about, create, beget, make, induce.
pity: (*n, v*) compassion, ruth; (*n*) mercy, commiseration, condolence, sympathy, clemency, remorse; (*v*) sympathize, compassionate, feel sorry for. ANTONYMS: (*n*) blame, cruelty, indifference, harshness, joy.
racked: (*adj*) assured, confident, miserable.
shake: (*n, v*) jolt, beat, jar, quiver, wave; (*v*) agitate, excite, disturb; (*adv, v*) brandish; (*adj, v*) quake, totter. ANTONYMS: (*v*) soothe, steady.
wronged: (*adj*) upset, hurt, indignant, offended.

money back. And it's nothing but **rightful** as you should. And I'd ha' said the "Amens", and willing, at the holy matrimony; but Tookey's done it a good while now, and I hope you'll have none the worse luck."

In the open yard before the Rainbow the party of guests were already assembled, though it was still nearly an hour before the appointed feast time. But by this means they could not only enjoy the slow advent of their pleasure; they had also ample leisure to talk of Silas Marner's strange history, and arrive by due **degrees** at the conclusion that he had brought a blessing on himself by acting like a father to a lone **motherless** child. Even the farrier did not negative this sentiment: on the contrary, he took it up as **peculiarly** his own, and invited any hardy person present to **contradict** him. But he met with no contradiction; and all differences among the company were **merged** in a general agreement with Mr. Snell's sentiment, that when a man had deserved his good luck, it was the part of his neighbours to wish him joy.

As the bridal group approached, a hearty cheer was raised in the Rainbow yard; and Ben Winthrop, whose jokes had retained their acceptable flavour, found it **agreeable** to turn in there and receive congratulations; not requiring the proposed interval of quiet at the Stone-pits before joining the company.

Eppie had a larger garden than she had ever expected there now; and in other ways there had been alterations at the expense of Mr. Cass, the landlord, to suit Silas's larger family. For he and Eppie had declared that they would rather stay at the Stone-pits than go to any new home. The garden was fenced with stones on two sides, but in front there was an open fence, through which the flowers shone with answering gladness, as the four united people came within sight of them.

"O father," said Eppie, "what a pretty home ours is! I think nobody could be happier than we are."

Thesaurus

agreeable: (*adj*) accordant, nice, sweet, consistent, suitable, amusing, enjoyable, affable; (*adj, v*) pleasant, desirable; (*adj, n*) acceptable. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) disagreeable, discordant, unpleasant, nasty, unwilling, resistant, aggressive, repugnant, averse, stubborn, unacceptable.

contradict: (*v*) deny, oppose, belie, conflict, confute, controvert, contravene, disprove, refute, invalidate, impugn. ANTONYMS: (*v*) agree, match, correspond, approve, corroborate, prove, support, reinforce.

degrees: (*n*) degree, temperature, compass rose, cardinal points.

merged: (*adj*) integrated, amalgamated, unified, incorporate, united, fused, combined, interconnected, mixed, intermingled, complex.

motherless: (*adj*) unparented, parentless, udderless.

peculiarly: (*adj, adv*) particularly, curiously, unusually, uncommonly, singularly; (*adv*) especially, oddly, strangely, specifically, weirdly, specially. ANTONYMS: (*adv*) typically, ordinarily, slightly.

rightful: (*adj*) right, lawful, just, justifiable, proper, legal, equitable, licit, real, genuine, true. ANTONYMS: (*adj*) wrongful, illegal, unlawful, fake.

GLOSSARY

aaron: (n) hank Aaron
abandon: (v) relinquish, renounce, resign, vacate, waive, evacuate, desert, give up, leave, depart, throw away. ANTONYMS: (v) keep, support, maintain, adopt, retain, continue, defend; (n) restraint, inhibition, deliberation, control
aberration: (n) insanity, aberrancy, frenzy, deviation, mistake, aberrance, oddity, distortion; (n, v) diversion; (adj, n) mania, derangement. ANTONYMS: (n) regularity, average, conformity, mean, sameness, norm, normality
abide: (v) endure, bide, undergo, tolerate, take, suffer, stomach, bear, brook; (adj, v) stay, dwell. ANTONYMS: (v) check, depart, disallow, disapprove, disbelieve, journey, dodge, leave, migrate, move, pass
abrupt: (adj) sudden, brusque, sharp, precipitous, steep, instantaneous, unexpected, swift, instant, hasty; (n) bold. ANTONYMS: (adj) gentle, gradual, rambling, gracious, courteous, polite, anticipated, kind, calm, protracted, deliberate
abruptly: (adv) precipitously, rudely, brusquely, curtly, gruffly, shortly, sharply, bluntly, hastily, unexpectedly, steeply. ANTONYMS: (adv) gradually, civilly, attentively, kindly, politely, verbosely, eventually, pleasantly, slowly, indirectly
absently: (adv) absentmindedly, missingly, lackingly, inattentively, wantingly, offly, deficiently, lostly, removedly, preoccupiedly, outly
absorbed: (adj) rapt, intent, immersed, fixed, deep, engaged, preoccupied, pensive, fascinated, enthralled, held. ANTONYMS: (adj) bored, disinterested, distracted, restless, unfocused, uninterested, indifferent, shallow, superficial, detached
absorbing: (adj) fascinating, engrossing, charming, enthralling, gripping, captivating, riveting, absorbent, attractive, readable; (adj, v) exciting. ANTONYMS: (adj) dull, irksome, tedious, repellent, uninteresting
abstract: (adj) theoretical; (n) abridgement, epitome, summary, abridgment, precis; (v) abridge, filch, purloin; (n, v) digest, extract. ANTONYMS: (adj) concrete, real, literal, material, physical, specific, objective; (v) expand, lengthen, strengthen, insert
abstraction: (n) abstract, reverie, engrossment, extraction, withdrawal, removal, deduction, abbreviation, preoccupancy, theorisation, theorization. ANTONYMS: (n) attentiveness, inclusion, alertness, concentration, fact
abundance: (adj) plenty; (n) plenitude, store, richness, profusion, amplitude, exuberance, affluence, treasure, enough; (adj, n) riches. ANTONYMS: (n) scarcity, shortage, insufficiency, lack, aridity, scarceness, paucity, emptiness, fruitlessness, bareness
abundant: (adj, n) lush, luxuriant; (adj) generous, thick, plenty, affluent, liberal, fruitful, teeming, fertile, ample. ANTONYMS: (adj) sparse, meager, scanty, infertile, scant, arid, rare, empty, skimpy, lacking, fruitless
accent: (v) emphasize, emphasise, punctuate, accentuate; (n) dialect, emphasis, idiom, importance, speech, articulation, pronunciation. ANTONYMS: (v) attenuate, downplay, hide, ignore, lessen, minimize, slight
accepting: (adj) tolerant, sympathetic, thoughtful, understanding, willing to help, yielding, lenient, acceptant, obliging, soft, permissive. ANTONYMS: (adj) resistant, uncooperative, unforgiving, severe, unsympathetic
accession: (n) increase, acceptance, augmentation, access, acquisition, agreement, accretion, assent, entrance, coming, increment. ANTONYMS: (n) abdication, decline, deposition, disagreement, discard, impeachment, renunciation, resignation, withdrawal, fall
accidental: (adj) casual, unintentional, adventitious, unintended, incidental, chance, random, unforeseen, unexpected, contingent, haphazard. ANTONYMS: (adj) deliberate, designed, intended, planned, premeditated
accommodate: (adj, v) fit, adapt, suit; (n, v) oblige; (v) provide, contain, quarter, lodge, reconcile, fashion, hold. ANTONYMS: (v) constrain, block, disoblige, hinder, impede, incommode, limit, prevent, stop, bar
accommodated: (adj) meet
accompanying: (adj) concomitant, concurrent, related, acceding, incidental, accessory, subservient, auxiliary, collateral, minor, supplementary
accomplishment: (n) attainment, completion, exploit, performance, deed, skill, fulfillment, feat, action, act, acquisition. ANTONYMS: (n) abandonment, washout, flop, debacle, defeat
accomplishments: (n) benefit, actions, background, Comings and Goings, deeds, events, happenings, activities
accordance: (n) harmony, agreement, conformity, unison, concordance,

coincidence, accordancy, admission, fitness, consensus, concent

according: (adj) pursuant, consonant, equal, agreeable, harmonious, conformable, consistent, corresponding, respondent; (adv) correspondingly, accordingly

accursed: (adj) execrable, abominable, detestable, accurst, hateful, damned, damnable, maledict, blasted; (v) atrocious, stranded

accusation: (n) complaint, charge, accusal, blame, allegation, condemnation, insinuation, denunciation, indictment, inculpation, impeachment. ANTONYMS: (n) exoneration, argument, compliment

accuse: (v) charge, incriminate, arraign, denounce, defame, criminate, indict, fault, betray, condemn, inculpate. ANTONYMS: (v) absolve, exculpate, exonerate, praise, support, clear

accusing: (adj) accusative, accusive, inculpatory, inculpative, criminative, criminatory, critical, denunciatory; (adj, n) reproving; (n) reproachful; (v) accuse

accustomed: (adj, n) habitual; (adj) familiar, normal, wonted, usual, natural, everyday, ordinary, habituated, common, traditional. ANTONYMS: (adj) unusual, green, unseasoned, unconventional, untrained, abnormal, uncharacteristic, exceptional

ache: (n, v) hunger, pain, hurt, yen; (n) twinge, thirst; (v) long, yearn, itch, smart, pine. ANTONYMS: (v) help, assist; (n) comfort, ease, health, relief, joy

aching: (adj) sore, achy, hurt, uncomfortable, tender, hurtful, agonizing; (n) ache, pain, hurting; (v) griped

acknowledge: (v) recognize, confess, accept, profess, own, admit, concede, appreciate, notice, declare, approve. ANTONYMS: (v) ignore, overlook, reject, repudiate, snub, refuse, renounce, abjure, disavow, disregard, refute

acquaintance: (n) connection, friend, acquaintanceship, mate, awareness, associate, buddy, friendship, intercourse, companion; (n, v) knowledge. ANTONYMS: (n) ignorance, inexperience, unfamiliarity, animosity, enemy

acquaintances: (n) associates

acquiescence: (n) compliance, consent, resignation, permission, sanction, approval, accord, agreement, submission, conformity; (n, v) assent. ANTONYMS: (n) disagreement, insubordination, rebellion, defiance, rejection

acute: (adj, n, v) sharp; (adj) incisive, intense, penetrating, keen, severe, critical; (adj, v) high, shrewd; (adj, n) strong, smart. ANTONYMS: (adj) obtuse, insignificant, stupid, unimportant, moderate, blunt, slow, slight, mild, minor, imperceptive

acuteness: (n) acuity, sharpness, acumen, discrimination, gravity, insight, sensitivity, perspicacity, penetration, keenness, intensity. ANTONYMS: (n) faintness, insignificance, dullness

adapted: (adj) altered, fit, agreeable, conformable, fitted, appropriate, prepared, tailored, modified; (adj, v) convenient, proper. ANTONYM: (adj) unaccustomed

a-day: (n) target date

addiction: (n) dependence, devotion, dependency, habit, enslavement, trick, tendency, custom, fascination, zeal, craving

addition: (n) accession, accessory, increase, extension, addendum, accretion, attachment, appendage, annex, extra; (n, prep) accumulation. ANTONYMS: (n) removal, estimation, deduction, exclusion, decline, erosion, loss, setback

addled: (adj) muddled, bewildered, acarpous, unfruitful, arid, infecund, unfertile, unprolific, sterile, stale, tainted

adherence: (n) observance, loyalty, coherence, cohesion, commitment, tenacity, constancy, fidelity, devotion, attachment, faithfulness. ANTONYMS: (n) disloyalty, disobedience

adherents: (n) followers, following

adhesive: (adj) clingy, gummy, tenacious, sticky, clammy, gooey, agglutinative; (n) cement, glue, paste; (v) cohesive. ANTONYMS: (adj) nonadhesive, open, separated, slippery, loose

adjoining: (adj) contiguous, neighbor, near, abutting, touching, conterminous, neighboring, immediate, next, vicinal; (adj, v) close. ANTONYMS: (adj) separate, divided, detached, apart, far

adjust: (v) temper, accommodate, adapt, align, fix, set, fit, regulate; (adj, v) balance, dress; (n, v) square. ANTONYMS: (v) derange, upset, unsuit, unfit, confuse, disorganize, disorder, disarrange, maintain, leave, worsen

adjusted: (adj) altered, set, arranged, accustomed, correct, fitted, right, tuned, secure, familiarised, familiarized. ANTONYM: (adj) maladjusted

admiration: (n) esteem, adoration, appreciation, reverence, estimation, amazement, liking, awe, compliment; (adj, n) regard; (v) laud. ANTONYMS: (n) disdain, criticism, disapproval, contempt, abhorrence, loathing, disgust, despising, dishonor, disparagement, detestation

admire: (v) revere, look up to, idolize, appreciate, adore, wonder, praise, worship, admiring, esteem, honor. ANTONYMS: (v) despise, loathe, scorn, hate, condemn, abhor, disrespect, detest, disregard, disapprove, deprecate

admission: (n) acknowledgment, access, confession, reception, entrance fee, declaration, recognition, admittance, profession, confirmation; (v) acknowledge. ANTONYMS: (n) impediment, secret, concealment, blockage, barring, confidentiality, exclusion

admonished: (adj) reprimanded, reproved, chastened

admonishingly: (adv) reproachfully, reprovingly, admonitorily

admonition: (n) advice, caution, admonishment, reproof, exhortation, lesson, counsel, monition, caveat, censure, rebuke. ANTONYM: (n) approval

adopt: (v) admit, affiliate, assume, borrow, espouse, take up, take, pass, acquire, choose, embrace. ANTONYMS: (v) disinherit, cancel, discard, shun, repudiate, refuse, ignore, oppose

adoption: (n) acceptance, espousal, selection, acceptation, assumption, borrowing, embracement, introduction; (v) adopt; (adj) conversion, bread of life. ANTONYM: (n) abandonment

adore: (v) worship, idolize, admire, glorify, cherish, appreciate; (n, v) honor; (adj) adoring, worshipping, worshiping; (adv) adoringly. ANTONYMS: (v) detest, despise, condemn, loathe, disrespect, abhor, scorn

adroit: (adj) dexterous, ingenious,

slick, intelligent, expert, artful, able, clever, adept, politic, sharp. ANTONYMS: (adj) awkward, maladroit, dim, inept, bumbling, stupid, unskilled, dense, fumbling, naive, incompetent

adulterated: (adj) adulterate, debased, unclean, dirty, corrupted, sophisticated, watery, sham, corrupt; (v) contraband, surreptitious

advancing: (adj) progressive, moving forward, increasing, moving, processive, thriving, ongoing, aggressive; (n) advancement, progression, proceeding

advent: (n) coming, arrival, apparition, appearance, approach, entrance, emergence, Second Coming, reaching, season, Christmas. ANTONYMS: (n) departure, end, exit, disappearance

adventurous: (adj) unsafe, venturesome, enterprising, plucky, audacious, bold, courageous, daring, brave, foolhardy, rash. ANTONYMS: (adj) cautious, prudent, careful, timid

advise: (v) recommend, propose, warn, inform, acquaint, suggest, notify, announce, tell, offer, forewarn. ANTONYMS: (v) betray, deceive, delude, fool, trick

affection: (n) charity, attachment, fondness, heart, love, disease, nature, feeling, affectionateness, tenderness, kindness. ANTONYMS: (n) disgust, neglect, malice, loathing, dislike, detachment, coldness, roughness

affectionate: (adj) fond, tender, kind, mild, devoted, ardent, warm, cordial, caring, brotherly; (adj, adv) fatherly. ANTONYMS: (adj) uncaring, callous, undemonstrative, aloof, cool, disapproving, reserved, antagonistic, paternal, rough

affectionately: (adv) lovingly, tenderly, warmly, dearly, caringly, devotedly, kindly, ardently, cordially, amorously, dotingly. ANTONYMS: (adv) disapprovingly, frostily, roughly

affections: (n) bosom

affirmative: (adj) positive, affirmatory, assertive, ratifying, concurring; (adv) yes; (n) affirmation, avowal, assenting; (adj, v) predicatory, declaratory. ANTONYMS: (adj) dissenting; (n) no

afore: (adv) ahead, along, before, forwards, formerly, beforehand, previously; (adj) erewhile, aforehand, theretofore, preceding

aggravated: (adj) angry, infuriated, incensed, annoyed, vexed, intense, grievous, provoked, exasperated, afflictive. ANTONYMS: (adj) calm, pleased

agile: (adj) active, nimble, spry, quick, adroit, deft, lively, dapper, supple, lithe, astute. ANTONYMS: (adj) stiff, ponderous, brittle, logical, oafish, slow, sluggish, unfit, awkward, heavy, inflexible

agitated: (adj) upset, excited, nervous, restive, tumultuous, distressed, tense, jumpy, overwrought, anxious, alarmed. ANTONYMS: (adj) calm, lethargic, tranquil, relaxed, assured, cool, still

agitation: (n) disturbance, excitement, tumult, stirring, convulsion, stir, commotion, emotion, unrest, shake, turmoil. ANTONYMS: (n) serenity, calm, equanimity, rest, peace, deterrent

agoing: (adv) agate, afoot; (v) set on foot, set up

agreeable: (adj) accordant, nice, sweet, consistent, suitable, amusing, enjoyable, affable; (adj, v) pleasant, desirable; (adj, n) acceptable. ANTONYMS: (adj) disagreeable, discordant, unpleasant, nasty, unwilling, resistant, aggressive, repugnant, averse, stubborn, unacceptable

aided: (adj) power, favored

ajar: (v) dissentient, unclosed, unstopped, wide open, out of tune; (adj) open, gaping, partly open, not closed

akin: (adj) near, like, allied, equivalent, alike, similar, analogous, parallel, cognate, kindred, corresponding. ANTONYMS: (adj) unconnected, alien, disconnected, dissimilar, different

alarm: (n, v) alert, scare, awe, panic; (n) consternation, alarm clock, fright, alarum, terror; (v) agitate, horrify. ANTONYMS: (n, v) comfort; (v) reassure, soothe, assure; (n) reassurance, composure, nonchalance, assurance, bravery, confidence, order

alarmed: (adj) afraid, scared, frightened, apprehensive, horrified, anxious, uneasy, agitated, shocked, terrified, concerned. ANTONYM: (adj) carefree

alfred: (n) Alfred the Great

alibi: (n, v) excuse; (n) plea, pretext, defense, subterfuge, pretense, pretence, vindication, explanation; (v) justify, explain

alike: (adj) corresponding, equal, equivalent, cognate, analogical, parallel, analogous, identical, similar, the same, duplicate. ANTONYMS: (adj) different, dissimilar, contrasting, unalike, disparate, unlike, opposite; (adv) differently, unequally, unevenly

alleged: (adj) ostensible, apparent, assumed, professed, supposed, apologetic, pretended, putative, so-called, purported, believed. ANTONYMS: (adj) certain, definite, sure

alley: (n) track, road, passage, lane, alleyway, aisle, path, runway, pathway, street, back street

allied: (adj) related, confederate, united, cognate, connected, joined, relative, near, associated, linked, confederative. ANTONYMS: (adj) unrelated, disunited, independent, sole, unfriendly, unconnected, unallied

all-important: (adj) necessary, life-and-death, critical

allure: (n, v) tempt, decoy, lure, appeal, draw, entice, seduce; (v) attract, persuade; (n) attraction, charisma. ANTONYMS: (n) repulsion, ugliness, repulsiveness; (v) repel, dissuade, discourage, threaten, warn, deter, prevent

allusion: (n) innuendo, reference, cue, suggestion, mention, intimation, pointer, insinuation, implication, indication, clue

almighty: (adj) omnipotent, powerful, potent, great, supreme; (adj, n) divine; (n) lord, Jehovah, deity, God, godhead. ANTONYMS: (adj) ineffectual, insignificant, lay, powerless, lowly

aloof: (adj) distant, reserved, cool, standoffish, unconcerned, indifferent, unfriendly, frigid, arrogant, cold; (adv) afar. ANTONYMS: (adj) friendly, involved, approachable, sociable, outgoing, open, enthusiastic, relaxed, communicative, affable, respectful

aloud: (adv) loud, out loud, strong, out, audibly, hard, forte. ANTONYMS: (adv) softly, inaudibly, quietly

alter: (v) change, adapt, move, convert, adjust, amend, affect,

transform, correct, vary, shift. ANTONYMS: (v) continue, keep, leave, preserve, worsen, retain, standardize, straighten, clarify

alteration: (n) adjustment, change, revision, shift, changeover, conversion, modification, variation, reversal, metamorphosis, amendment. ANTONYMS: (n) fixity, preservation

altered: (adj) transformed, changed, diversified, varied, distorted, affected, castrated, malformed, misrepresented, misshapen; (v) battered. ANTONYMS: (adj) unaltered, unadjusted

alternate: (adj, n, v) substitute; (n) surrogate, standby, vice; (v) reciprocate, vary, take turns, fluctuate, change; (adj, n) alternative; (adj) secondary. ANTONYMS: (adj) consecutive, successive, required, opposite, necessary, essential; (v) remain, continue

alternating: (adj) intermittent, recurrent, irregular, regular, every other, blinking, successive; (adv) back and forth. ANTONYM: (adj) direct

amazement: (n) admiration, wonder, surprise, consternation, stupefaction, stupor, wonderment, feeling, alarm, jolt; (v) amaze. ANTONYMS: (n) preparation, indifference, expectation, coolness, cool, composure, calmness, contempt, belief

ambitiously: (adv) eagerly, aspiringly, challengingly, enterprisingly, difficultly, energetically, vaultingly, pretentiously, avidly, hopefully, desirously

amen: (adj) right, correct; (n) Amon; (adv) positively, yes

amends: (n) atonement, compensation, recompense, satisfaction, redress, damages, reprisal, indemnity, requital; (n, v) restitution, restoration

amenities: (n) creature comforts, living, support, sustenance, livelihood, keep, courtesy, propriety, etiquette, public services, manners

amiable: (adj) friendly, genial, agreeable, benign, complaisant, sweet, cordial, pleasant, likable, nice, lovely. ANTONYMS: (adj) disagreeable, argumentative, aggressive, antisocial, unkind, hateful, mean, quarrelsome, rude, surly, cold

amidst: (adv, prep) among; (adv) amongst; (prep) between, midst, into

ample: (adj) abundant, big, broad, copious, large, plentiful, heavy, liberal, roomy, affluent, considerable. ANTONYMS: (adj) small, meager, insufficient, scarce, sparse, scant, cramped, narrow, partial, sketchy, slender

amulet: (n) talisman, fetish, mascot, periapt, charm, telesm, philter, spell, phylactery, keepsake, good luck charm

amusement: (n) pleasure, recreation, entertainment, distraction, diversion, sport, pastime, laughter, enjoyment, joy, hobby. ANTONYMS: (n) sadness, boredom, work, tedium, business, despondency, discomfort, displeasure

amusing: (adj) humorous, fun, pleasant, entertaining, risible, comical, diverting, enjoyable, laughable, agreeable, pleasing. ANTONYMS: (adj) tragic, boring, unpleasant, unfunny, tiring, grim, depressing, sad, annoying, heavy, serious

analogical: (v) analogous; (adj) similar, figurative, normal; (adv) alike

ancestors: (n) family, ancestor, lineage, pedigree, parents, majority, intimates, genealogy, family tree, associates, relatives

anchor: (n) mainstay, armature, grappling iron, grapnel, chapelet; (v) fasten, secure, cast anchor, fix; (adj) refuge, rest. ANTONYMS: (v) release, detach

angel: (n, v) sponsor, support; (n) backer, cherub, messenger, patron, benefactor, saint; (adj) Dulcinea, goddess; (adj, n) darling. ANTONYMS: (n) fiend, devil, jerk, demon

angle: (n, v) hook, incline, tilt; (v) lean; (n) view, viewpoint, aspect, position, point of view, pitch, perspective

angrily: (adv) irately, passionately, fiercely, indignantly, cholericly, resentfully, enragedly, infuriatedly, wrathfully, madly, crossly. ANTONYMS: (adv) warmly, lightly, calmly, cheerfully, gently, gladly

anguish: (n, v) pain, ache; (n) torment, agony, torture, distress, misery, suffering, despair, grief, sorrow. ANTONYMS: (n) pleasure, happiness, calm, euphoria, joyfulness, ecstasy, content, peace, hopefulness

animation: (adj, n) life, vivacity; (n) liveliness, vitality, activity, spirit, exhilaration, dash, energy, buoyancy; (adj) alacrity. ANTONYMS: (n) lethargy, lifelessness, inertness, inertia, sluggishness, boredom

ankle: (n) knuckle, kimbo, crane, fluke, crutch, crotch, zigzag, groin, sickle, scythe, malleolus

annoyance: (n) anger, harassment, aggravation, disturbance, inconvenience, pain, bother, botheration, temper, displeasure, vexation. ANTONYMS: (n) calm, satisfaction, patience, calmness, delight, equanimity, advantage, balm

annulling: (n) cancellation, circumduction, abolition; (adj) negative

anointing: (v) plating, barrel plating; (n) inunction, anointment

answerable: (adj, v) amenable, liable, responsible, subject, exposed, bound; (v) uncommendable, exceptionable; (adj) conformable, adequate, responsal. ANTONYMS: (adj) irrefutable, unaccountable

answering: (adj) respondent, responsive, according, agreeing, responsory; (n) respondency

anthem: (n) song, hymn, chorale, canticle, chant, choral, carol, psalm, paean, national anthem, chaunt

anticipate: (v) expect, foretell, think, forecast, forestall, calculate, estimate, predict, prevent, presume, guess. ANTONYM: (v) doubt

anticipated: (adj) expected, foreseen, predictable, due, estimated, appointed, awaited, coming, forthcoming, natural, planned

anticipation: (n) forecast, hope, foresight, prevention, augury, expectance, hopefulness, prefiguration, presentiment; (n, v) outlook, prospect. ANTONYMS: (n) despair, boredom

anxiety: (n) disquiet, trouble, fear, care, alarm, anxiousness, uneasiness, worry, anguish, concern; (adj, n) solicitude. ANTONYMS: (n) calm, bravery, confidence, reassurance, security, relaxation, indifference, serenity, tranquility, peace, satisfaction

anyhow: (adv) somehow, at any rate, in any case, whatever, in any event, regardless, however, though, besides, nonetheless, one way or another
apoplexy: (n) stroke, CVA, seizure, ictus; (adj) paralysis, inanition, collapse, deliquium, exhaustion, sideration, syncope
apparition: (n) ghost, phantom, spirit, spectre, hallucination, spook, shade, eidolon, wraith, advent; (n, v) vision
appetite: (n, v) desire; (n) appetence, appetency, relish, inclination, stomach, taste, thirst, passion, liking, gusto. ANTONYMS: (n) dislike, repulsion, revulsion, apathy, distaste
appliance: (n) apparatus, device, gadget, facility, machine, implement, furniture, convenience, contrivance, application, gear
applying: (adj) applicatory, applicative
appoint: (v) assign, accredit, designate, set, prescribe, delegate, create, make, commission, fix; (n, v) name. ANTONYMS: (v) dismiss, fire, unfurnish, expel, dismantle, discharge, strip, elect, change
appreciated: (adj) respected, prized, valued, comprehended, welcome, treasured, valuable, aesthetic, apprehended, esteemed, gratifying
appreciation: (n) admiration, acknowledgment, recognition, approval, taste, understanding, awareness, conception, grasp, feeling; (n, v) sense. ANTONYMS: (n) depreciation, loss, ungratefulness, ignorance, disrespect, disregard, disapproval, deflation, dislike, discomfort, condemnation
appreciatory: (adj) thankful, grateful
apprehend: (v) arrest, comprehend, grasp, catch, understand, fathom, realize, sense, follow, nail; (adj, v) conceive. ANTONYMS: (v) misunderstand, discharge, free, liberate
approaching: (adj) future, forthcoming, impending, imminent, oncoming, near; (adj, n) coming; (n, v) approach; (adv) nearly, almost; (prep) toward
appropriateness: (n) propriety, appositeness, decency, felicitousness, fitness, convenience, correctness, felicity, rightness, suitability, adequacy. ANTONYMS: (n) unsuitability, insignificance, incorrectness
appropriating: (n) capture
arched: (adj, v) bowed, arcuate; (adj) bent, vaulted, convex, arciform, arced, domed, hooked, hunched, crooked
ardent: (adj, n) enthusiastic, glowing; (adj, v) burning, fervent, impassioned; (adj) keen, vehement, eager, warm, acute, fervid. ANTONYMS: (adj) apathetic, cool, unenthusiastic, traitorous, mild, frigid, dispassionate, cold, disloyal, impassive, calm
arguing: (n) controversy, contention, disputation, contestation, polemics, tilt; (v) argue; (adj) quarrelsome, argumentative
argumentative: (adj) quarrelsome, litigious, controversial, cantankerous, combative, forensic, hostile, polemic, disputative, contrary, ratiocinative. ANTONYMS: (adj) amiable, friendly, agreeable, conciliatory, passive, gentle
aristocratic: (adj) gentle, autocratic, refined, stylish, Belgravian, aristocratical, condescending, well-bred, royal; (n) princely, titled. ANTONYMS: (adj) popular, unrefined, bourgeois, common, lowly
arithmetical: (adj) statistical, mathematical, numerable, calculable, computable, numerical, numeric, analytic, algebraic
armchair: (n) fauteuil, easy-chair, seat, easy chair, chair, lounger, recliner, elbowchair
arming: (n) arms, militarisation, mobilization, militarization, mobilisation, armed, outfitting, equipping
arrange: (v) dress, settle, order, set, pack, agree, adapt, do, classify, straighten; (n, v) adjust. ANTONYMS: (v) disarrange, cancel, disorder, disorganize, improvise, jumble, change, disband, reject, bungle
arrears: (n) debt, arrearage, default, balance due, deferred payment, liability, backlog, debit, shortfall, shortage, money owing. ANTONYMS: (n) credit, surplus
arrest: (n, v) halt, check, catch, capture, hold, collar; (n) apprehension, custody; (v) apprehend, retard, inhibit. ANTONYMS: (n, v) discharge; (v) liberate, promote, forward, encourage, activate, advance, prompt, help; (n) freeing, liberation
arriving: (n) arrival; (adj) incoming, inbound, received, external, homeward bound, inward, new, inward bound. ANTONYM: (adj) outgoing
artful: (adj) crafty, cunning, scheming, wily, shrewd, insidious, designing, sly, adroit, subtle, disingenuous. ANTONYMS: (adj) artless, unskillful, inept, ingenuous, unskilled, open, straight
articulate: (v) speak, pronounce, utter, vocalize, voice, state, say, joint, enunciate, express; (adj) eloquent. ANTONYMS: (adj) incoherent, unintelligible, illogical, misrepresented, mumbled, unclear, unarticulated; (v) mumble, disconnect, misrepresent, misspeak
artificial: (adj) affected, theatrical, unreal, unnatural, strained, man-made, bogus, forced, phony, feigned, false. ANTONYMS: (adj) genuine, real, sincere, authentic, organic, untreated
artisan: (n) craftsman, artist, operative, machinist, journeyman, worker, workman, Wright, carpenter, tradesman; (adj) mechanic
ascertain: (v) determine, find out, learn, discover, check, tell, control, find, ensure, detect; (adj, v) establish. ANTONYM: (v) disprove
ascertained: (adj) discovered, determined; (v) absolute, recognized, received, noted, notorious, decisive, unmistakable, unequivocal, positive
ashamed: (adj) hangdog, guilty, embarrassed, sheepish, remorseful, regretful, bashful, disconcerted, contrite, chagrined; (v) dashed. ANTONYMS: (adj) proud, arrogant, unremorseful, unashamed, pleased, blatant, bold, happy, unabashed, unrepentant
asleep: (adj) sleeping, deceased, sleepy, dormant, numb, dead, sound asleep, snoozing, slumbering, napping, gone. ANTONYMS: (adj) up, attentive, alert, conscious
assembled: (adj) amassed, collected, collective, concentrated, united, gather, assembling, gathered, massed, built, aggregate
assembling: (n) assemblage, assembly, collection, collecting, compilation, meeting, aggregation,

congregation, montage; (adj) gathering, assembled
assent: (n) acceptance, acquiescence, approval, agreement, compliance, admission, approbation; (v) accede, accord, agree; (adj, v) acquiesce. ANTONYMS: (v) resist, disagree, disapprove, reject, refuse; (n) disagreement, refusal, resistance
assert: (v) allege, affirm, say, claim, declare, swear, show, avow, aver, maintain, argue. ANTONYMS: (v) reject, controvert, repress, refute
assigned: (adj) designated, allotted, specified, destined, designate, allocated, definite
assisted: (adj) aided
associates: (n) staff, membership, circle, entourage, intimates, people
assurance: (n) confidence, guarantee, belief, pledge, security, promise, sureness, poise, conviction, nerve, warrant. ANTONYMS: (n) doubt, uncertainty, mistrust, lie, fiction, awkwardness, timidity, clumsiness
assure: (n, v) certify, warrant, vouch; (v) secure, persuade, satisfy, reassure, affirm, promise, ascertain; (adj, v) ensure. ANTONYMS: (v) alarm, disclaim, deny, disbelieve, undermine
assuredly: (adv) certainly, confidently, positively, securely, indeed, definitely, undoubtedly, admittedly, safely, insuredly, decidedly
astonishment: (n) admiration, wonder, wonderment, surprise, marvel, stupefaction, confusion, consternation, awe, alarm, startle. ANTONYMS: (n) calmness, belief, contempt
atop: (adj) overhead
attachment: (n) appendix, addition, accessory, adherence, regard, link, bond, fitting, devotion, liking, connection. ANTONYMS: (n) aversion, estrangement, repulsion, separation, dislike
attacking: (adj) aggressive, assailing, invading, abusive, abhorrent, warlike, rebellious, assailant
attendant: (n) companion, follower, assistant, escort, subordinate, employee, guide, varlet; (adj) accompanying, concomitant, incidental. ANTONYMS: (n) superior, boss; (adj) absent, unrelated, significant
attending: (v) attend; (n) presence, nursing, care, appearing, observation; (adj) concomitant, attendant, ministrant, in attendance, ancillary. ANTONYMS: (n) nonattendance, inattention
attic: (adj) chaste, pure, elegant, classical, correct, artistic; (n) cockloft, loft, clerestory, house top, upper story
attire: (n, v) array, garb, apparel, wear; (n) costume, garment, outfit, clothes; (v) enrobe, clothe, dress up. ANTONYMS: (v) disrobe, bare, strip, unclothe; (n) nakedness
attired: (adj) clad, appareled, clothed, garbed, habilimented, robed; (adj, prep) garmented
attracted: (adj) paying attention, concerned, enamored, enthusiastic, interested, involved, amatory
attraction: (n) allure, invitation, affinity, appeal, charm, allurement, lure, fascination, bait, draw, attractiveness. ANTONYMS: (n) repulsion, revulsion, disgust, aversion, repellant, drawback
attribute: (adj, n) quality, property; (n, v) assign; (n) feature, emblem, characteristic, peculiarity, mark; (v) credit, impute, accredit
attributed: (adj) credited. ANTONYM: (adj) unofficial
attributes: (n) nature, property
auburn: (adj) bay, russet, reddish, foxy, coloured, dapple, coffee, chocolate, brunette; (adj, n) brown, tawny
audible: (adj) plain, hearable, distinct, detectable, sounding, sharp, sonic, definite, discernible, perceptible, sensory. ANTONYMS: (adj) inaudible, unintelligible, undetectable, silent, faint
authentic: (adj) genuine, actual, straight, right, real, accurate, valid, believable, bona fide, true; (adj, v) authoritative. ANTONYMS: (adj) bogus, fake, unrealistic, false, spurious, phony, counterfeit, dishonest, unauthorized, unbelievable, imitation
authoritativeness: (n) divine right, dynastic rights, magisteriality
averse: (adj) reluctant, indisposed, backward, opposed, unwilling, disinclined, loth, antagonistic, antipathetical, repugnant, antipathetic. ANTONYMS: (adj) inclined, sympathetic, caring, eager, willing, keen
avoidance: (n) escape, evasion, abstention, forbearance, cancellation, prevention, annulment, dodging, avoid, evade, shun. ANTONYMS: (n) embrace, confronting
avoided: (adj) unpopular
avoiding: (n) shunning; (adj) fugitive, antisocial
avow: (v) affirm, assert, declare, protest, confess, attest, asseverate; (adj, v) admit, acknowledge, own; (n, v) aver. ANTONYMS: (v) disavow, renounce, refute, disclaim, condemn, censure
avowal: (n) declaration, assertion, affirmation, admission, statement, recognition, acknowledgement, announcement, confession, testimony; (n, v) profession
avowed: (adj) acknowledged, attested, ostensible, sworn, stated, confirmed, declared, pretended, known, authenticated, apparent
awaiting: (adj) looming, imminent, in the near future, pending, expectant
awakened: (adj) excited, aroused, awakens, awoke, interested
awed: (adj) frightened, groveling, reverential, reverent, overwhelmed, overcome, intimidated, worshipful, impressed, fearful, abominable. ANTONYMS: (adj) unawed, irreverent
awhile: (adj) in transitu, en passant; (adv) briefly
awkward: (adj) inconvenient, clumsy, embarrassing, uncomfortable, ungainly, untoward, crude, inept, sticky, left-handed, heavy. ANTONYMS: (adj) graceful, easy, adroit, manageable, straightforward, simple, dexterous, rotund, convenient, helpful, skillful
awkwardness: (n) embarrassment, stiffness, unwieldiness, inconvenience, gawkiness, inelegance, troublesomeness, ineptitude, ineptness, gaucherie; (adj, n) delicacy. ANTONYMS: (n) gracefulness, grace, comfort, coordination, pride, urbanity, ease, assurance, liveliness, confidence, cooperation
awoke: (adj) awakened
bachelor: (adj) single, unmarried, unattached; (n) unmarried man, graduate, knight bachelor, widower, old bachelor, spinster, adult male, agamist. ANTONYMS: (adj) married; (n) husband
backward: (adj, adv) late, behindhand; (adj) tardy, retarded, reluctant, coy, slow, laggard, dilatory; (adv) behind, backwardly. ANTONYMS: (adj, adv) ahead;

(adv) onward; (adj) quick, developing, advanced, confident, brilliant, bold
baffled: (adj) bewildered, puzzled, perplexed, confounded, at sea, frustrated, befuddled, beaten, bemused, preoccupied, helpless. ANTONYM: (adj) clear
bags: (n) plenty, many, belongings, loads, luggage, heaps; (adj) numberless
baking: (adj) hot, scorching, roasting, burning, boiling, sweltering, torrid; (n) cookery, cooking, stoving, firing. ANTONYM: (adj) fresh
balloon: (v) inflate, ball, soar, distend, bulge, swell, bloat, billow, fly, increase; (adj, n) bubble. ANTONYMS: (v) contract, flatten, shrink, decrease
balm: (n) salve, unguent, incense, perfume, aroma, unction, liniment, balsam, arnica, lotion, fragrance. ANTONYMS: (n) irritant, nuisance
bandbox: (adj) dapper, spruce
baptism: (n) affusion, aspersion, chrism, sacrament, immersion, designation, entrance, introduction, initiation, blessing; (v) baptize
bare: (adj) naked, austere, bald, stark, bleak, exposed, desolate, plain; (adj, v) empty, vacant; (v) show. ANTONYMS: (adj) cultivated, ornate, concealed, elaborate, adorned, decorated, dressed, clothed, embellished; (v) cover, conceal
bargain: (adj, n, v) cheap; (n, v) covenant, deal; (n) agreement, treaty, arrangement, buy, chaffer; (v) exchange, stipulate, agree. ANTONYM: (adj) inflated
bark: (n, v) skin, yelp, snarl, cry, rind, shout; (v) growl, roar; (n) bay, peel, crust. ANTONYMS: (n, v) whisper
barren: (adj, n) sterile; (adj) infertile, deserted, arid, void, dry, stark, meagre, fruitless, abortive; (n) waste. ANTONYMS: (adj) productive, lush, fruitful, developing, growing, profitable, rewarding, rich, sheltered, humid, populous
barrier: (n) bar, bulwark, dam, rampart, hurdle, restraint, obstruction, handicap, partition, frontier, constraint. ANTONYMS: (n) advantage, opening, passage, aid
baseless: (adj) groundless, unwarranted, ungrounded, gratuitous, idle, unsupported, unfair, wanton, invalid, flimsy, undue. ANTONYMS: (adj) founded, sound, substantial, justified, valid, proven
bashfulness: (n) diffidence, shyness, coyness, humility, abashment, backwardness, reserve, timidity, constraint, embarrassment, stage fright
basin: (n) bowl, pot, hollow, washbowl, washbasin, depression, dock, tank, washstand, sink, basinful. ANTONYMS: (n) hill, hump
bassoon: (n) basset horn, serpent, contrafagotto, double bassoon, oboe, corno di bassetto, cor anglais, bass clarinet, corno Inglese, hautboy
batch: (n) band, lot, body, battery, charge, suite, squad, heap, bevy, covey, set. ANTONYMS: (n) single, individual
bate: (v) abate, curtail, discount, deduct, dequantitate, douse, contain, drench, detract; (n) battue, bath
bathed: (adj) sweaty
baths: (n) pool, bath, spring
bearing: (n, v) demeanor; (n) manner, direction, deportment, conduct, attitude, aspect, approach, appearance, respect, air. ANTONYMS: (n) insignificance, irrelevance; (adj) nonbearing
bears: (n) fissiped, badgers, Carnivora, order Carnivora
beast: (n) animal, monster, swine, fiend, creature, scavenger, savage, critter, animate being, barbarian; (adj) bear. ANTONYM: (n) man
beating: (n) reverse, defeat, whipping, thrashing, battery, flogging, pounding, pulsation, pulse, rout; (adj) pulsing. ANTONYMS: (n) victory, win
beats: (n) beat, beatniks, Beat Generation
bedding: (n) litter, bed, bed linen, quilt, cover, stratification, spread, blanket, bed clothing, bottom, foundation
beef: (n, v) grumble, moan, grouse, squawk, groan; (n) complaint, ox, fuss, beeves; (v) grouch, complain. ANTONYMS: (n) impotence, praise; (v) rejoice
beery: (n) groggy, flustered, disguised
beforehand: (adv) previously, ahead, in advance, in anticipation, first; (adj, adv) early, aforehand; (adj) advance, already, afore; (n) prior. ANTONYMS: (adv) afterwards, afterward, later, late, subsequently
beget: (v) father, engender, generate, get, produce, procreate, create, sire, cause, breed, bring about. ANTONYMS: (v) extinguish, destroy
begotten: (adj) generated, biological, create
begrimed: (adj) grubby, dirty, besmirched, unclean, raunchy, discolored, grungy, filthy, stained, dingy, soiled. ANTONYM: (adj) clean
behave: (n, v) conduct, exercise; (v) bear, deal, deport, operate, perform, acquit, walk, react, go. ANTONYMS: (v) misdemean, malfunction
beholden: (adj) thankful, indebted, obliged, indebted to, appreciative, beholding; (adj, v) under obligation, bound; (v) bounden. ANTONYMS: (adj) unbound, ungrateful
behoof: (n) advantage, behalf, service, behoove
belated: (adj) late, tardy, behindhand, slow, overdue, benighted, delayed, posthumous, too late, untimely; (adj, adv) behind. ANTONYMS: (adj) prompt, early, punctual, timely, premature
beliefs: (n) philosophy, persuasion, creed, thinking, values, principles, way of life, morals, viewpoint, attitude, ideas
believing: (adj) faith, believe, faithful, basic cognitive process, gullible, Catholic, religious, loyal, certain, Christian, credent
belike: (adv) probably, likely, presumably, perhaps, believably, in all probability
bells: (n) addition, approval, matrimony, marriage, approbation, wedding
belong: (v) appertain, pertain, lie, go, belong to, attach, dwell, consist, come, rank, stand. ANTONYMS: (v) separate, disagree, disassociate, leave, quit, differ
belonging: (adj) appertaining, appertinent, apropos, apposite; (n) household, family, appendage, appurtenance, intimacy, commodity, closeness. ANTONYM: (n) antipathy
belt: (n, v) band, hit, whack, wallop; (n) area, strap, strip, zone, fascia, baldric; (v) beat
benches: (n) bleachers
bend: (n, v) bow, turn, arch, arc, crook, twist, elbow; (adj, n, v) curve;

(v) stoop, crouch; (adj, v) flex. ANTONYMS: (n, v) square; (v) align, unbend, leave

bending: (n) bow, bend, deflection, deflexion, refraction, flexure, crook; (adj) flexible, supple, winding, pliant. ANTONYM: (adj) stiff

benefactor: (n) sponsor, patron, backer, supporter, giver, Good Samaritan, contributor, benefactress, philanthropist, helper, humanitarian. ANTONYMS: (n) antagonist, opposer, detractor

benignity: (n) kindliness, benignancy, favor, graciousness, tenderness, friendliness, amiability, benefaction; (adj, n) kindness, humanity; (adj) beneficence

bent: (adj) curved, arched, deformed, crooked; (n) propensity, inclination, fancy, leaning, flair, gift, curvature. ANTONYMS: (n) weakness, inability, aversion; (adj) undetermined, undecided, uncurved, uncaring, rigid, unbent

benumbed: (adj) torpid, asleep, stiff, insensible, dull, dead, numbed, hardened, drugged, uninterested, cold

benumbing: (adj) benumbed

bereavement: (n) mourning, loss, sorrow, sadness, privation, deprivation, death, grief, sorrowfulness, decease, demise

bergamot: (n) pulvil, orange, civet, burgamot, balm, bergamot orange

berried: (adj) bacciferous, baccate, fruitful

beset: (v) beleaguer, afflict, assault, siege, molest, worry, attack, plague, obsess, assail; (adv, v) surround

besides: (adv) as well, moreover, too, furthermore, again, as well as, anyway, additionally; (prep) apart from, beside; (adj, adv) more

bespoke: (adj) bespoken, custom, engaged, affianced, commissioned, customized, made to measure, made to order, modified, personalized, specially made

betimes: (adv) early, soon, anon, rath, betime, ahead of time, rathe

betray: (v) deceive, bewray, sell, grass, dupe, reveal, mislead, disclose, accuse, befool, bamboozle. ANTONYMS: (v) protect, undeceive, hide, defend, withhold

betrayal: (n) faithlessness, deception, treason, infidelity, subversiveness, traitorousness, disclosure, revelation, perfidy, disloyalty, dishonesty. ANTONYMS: (n) loyalty, safeguarding, keeping, honesty, guarding, preserving, allegiance

betraying: (adj) treacherous, revealing, Judas

betting: (adj) gambling, dissipated, sporting; (n) gaming

betty: (n) henhussy, cot Betty, old woman, cotquean, sissy

bewildered: (adj) bemused, confused, confounded, perplexed, befuddled, puzzled, dumbfounded, taken aback, addled, disoriented; (adj, v) lost. ANTONYMS: (adj) unimpressed, clear, oriented, precise, understanding, alert

bewildering: (adj) astonishing, puzzling, perplexing, confusing, marvelous, mystifying, amazing, astounding, discomfit, upsetting, staggering. ANTONYMS: (adj) enlightening, simple, soothing

bewilderment: (n) astonishment, quandary, confusion, surprise, wonder, bemusement, maze, chaos, jumble, mess; (adj, n) perplexity. ANTONYMS: (n) order, clarity

bewitching: (adj, v) charming, fascinating, captivating, engaging; (adj) attractive, seductive, lovely, winning, entrancing, enthralling; (v) bewitch

bible: (n) scripture, scriptures, book, Holy Scripture, word of God, good book, bibliography, bibliotheca, Holy Bible, handbook, word

bidding: (n) behest, order, dictate, charge, bid, request, call, dictation, direction, fiat; (adj) imperative

big-eyed: (adj) inquisitive

birthright: (n) patrimony, inheritance, heritage, claim, right of primogeniture, tradition, legacy, demand, due, entitlement, heirloom

biting: (adj, v) acute, acrid, sarcastic, sharp, acrimonious, pungent, severe, cutting; (adj) acid, bitter, barbed. ANTONYMS: (adj) mild, blunt, kind, bland, nice, soothing, sweet, hot, complimentary, faint, sympathetic

bitter: (adj, v) acrimonious, acrid; (adj) sharp, acid, malicious, caustic, virulent, sour, resentful, keen, acerbic. ANTONYMS: (adj) mild, charitable, hot, sugary, kind, wonderful, warm, pleasant, nice, agreeable, gentle

bitterly: (adv) bitingly, sourly, fiercely, cruelly, caustically, harshly, poignantly, piercingly, cuttingly, rancorously, acrimoniously. ANTONYMS: (adv) harmoniously, sweetly, warmly, gladly, agreeably, kindly, friendly

bitterness: (n) acerbity, animosity, gall, malice, resentment, enmity, acridity, acidity, bitter, rancor, sharpness. ANTONYMS: (n) joy, happiness, harmony, kindness, blandness, friendliness, goodwill, idealism, affection

blackening: (n) blackened, density, alkaline blackening, character assassination

blackness: (n) black, darkness, sable, gloom, nigritude, night, inkiness, dark, murk, murkiness, obscurity

blade: (n) knife, beau, foil, falchion, cutlass, sword, leaf, shaft, razor, brand, steel

blamable: (adj) faulty, culpable, reprehensible, blameworthy, blameable, blameful, censurable, delinquent, reprovable, condemnable, accountable

blameless: (adj) irreproachable, perfect, faultless, unimpeachable, pure, spotless, innocent, guiltless, inculpable, not guilty, clean. ANTONYMS: (adj) culpable, blameworthy, responsible, wrong, bad, sinful, shameful, flawed

blameworthy: (adj, v) reprehensible, uncommendable; (adj) guilty, blamable, blameful, censurable, at fault, blameable, to blame, illaudable, delinquent. ANTONYMS: (adj) innocent, blameless, commendable

blandly: (adv) dully, insipidly, mildly, suavely, flatly, uninterestingly, tamely, weakly, boringly, flavorlessly, oily. ANTONYMS: (adv) meaningfully, interestingly, admirably

blank: (adj) bare, empty, unfilled, pure, vacant, clean; (n) space, blankness, form, vacuity; (v) addle. ANTONYMS: (adj) full, expressive, used, understanding, thoughtful, incomplete, marked, filled, excited, lively, aware

blasphemy: (n) profanity, desecration, violation, profanation, oath, irreverence, curse, profaneness, discourtesy, cursing, insult. ANTONYMS: (n) adoration, respect, reverence

blaze: (n, v) flash, glare, flame, mark, scintillation; (n) fire, light, burning, inflammation, sheen; (adj, v) burn

blend: (n, v) mix; (v) amalgamate, combine, merge, fuse, commingle,

incorporate, admix; (n) amalgam, admixture, composite. ANTONYMS: (n, v) divide; (v) disharmonize, unmix, steady; (n) separation

blent: (adj) mixed

bless: (v) consecrate, celebrate, sanctify, anoint, eulogize, sign, praise, keep, grant, glorify; (n) blessing. ANTONYMS: (v) curse, condemn, disapprove, damn, disallow, deny

blessed: (adj) happy, holy, cursed, sacred, damned, hallowed, blasted, fortunate, saintly, lucky, divine. ANTONYMS: (adj) unlucky, condemned, damned, disapproved, unhappy, unholy, secular

blessing: (n) benediction, approval, mercy, felicity, benison, benefit, luck, advantage, boon, bless, godsend. ANTONYMS: (n) curse, misfortune, disaster, condemnation, adversity, desecration, refusal, veto, disadvantage

blessings: (n) blessing, godsend

blight: (n, v) blast, decay, plague; (v) damage, wither, blemish, perish; (n) bane, pest, curse, rust. ANTONYMS: (v) aid, help, guard, protect, enhance, improve; (n) health, boon, bounty

blighting: (adj) biting

blind: (n) curtain, shutter, veil, drape, awning, trick; (v) bedazzle, dazzle, daze; (adj) sightless; (adj, v) obscure. ANTONYMS: (adj) sighted, uncovered, understanding, sharp, seeing, revealed, quick, perceptive, open, controlled, cautious

blinded: (adj) blindfolded, blinder, blindly, reckless, unsighted, blindfold, dizzy

blindly: (adv) darkly, dimly, blindfoldly, purblindly, obscurely, heedlessly, unreasoningly, blindfold, unsightedly, inconsiderately, ignorantly. ANTONYMS: (adv) sensibly, carefully, considerately, purposely

blinking: (adj) flickering, bally, blooming; (adj, n) winking; (n) shimmer, blink, wink, twinkling, nictation, blink of an eye, nictitation

blocked: (adj) jammed, impeded, clogged, locked, stopped, hindered, block, obstruct, obstructed, choke, barren. ANTONYMS: (adj) free, fertile, open

blond: (adj, v) fair; (adj, n) blonde; (adj) light, flaxen, pale, creamy; (n) someone, soul, somebody, person; (v) to stick together. ANTONYM: (adj) brunet

blonde: (adj) fair, golden, fairish, sandy, flaxen; (n) towheaded, person, somebody, someone, soul, buff. ANTONYM: (n) brunette

bloom: (adj, n, v) flower; (v) prosper, flourish, thrive, burgeon; (adj, v) blow, fructify; (n) prime, blush, flush, bud. ANTONYMS: (v) shrivel, struggle, wane, die, deteriorate, decrease; (n) pallor, withering

blooming: (adj) rosy, thriving, flourishing, healthy, prosperous, ruddy, booming, blossoming, cherry, verdant, green. ANTONYMS: (adj) arid, pale

blossom: (adj, n, v) flower, blow; (n, v) bud; (n) blooming, heyday, efflorescence; (v) prosper, flourish, thrive, progress, unfold. ANTONYMS: (v) wither, deteriorate, struggle, shrivel, shrink, fade, die; (n) withering

blowing: (n) processing, insufflation, bravado; (v) fanning, blow out; (adj) windy, breezy

blown: (adj) puffy, panting, swollen, winded, inflated, moving, high, haughty lofty, late; (v) puffing and blowing; (n) blowen

blowsy: (adj) slatternly, untidy, sluttish, dowdy, ruddy

blunt: (adj, v) dull, deaden; (adj) bluff, plain, direct, forthright, frank, candid, outspoken, round, abrupt. ANTONYMS: (v) hone, sharpen, point, accentuate, needle; (adj) devious, pointed, thoughtful, polite, guarded, gentle

blurred: (adj) fuzzy, indistinct, foggy, blurry, bleary, vague, out of focus, blear, cloudy, clouded, dim. ANTONYMS: (adj) sharp, definite, distinct, precise, certain

blush: (n, v) glow, color; (v) redden, crimson; (n) red, bloom, rosiness, ruddiness, redness; (adj) bashful; (adv) blushingly. ANTONYMS: (v) blanch, pale, blench; (n) paleness

blushing: (adj) rosy, coy, blushful, flushed, red, shy, bashful, overmodest, ruddy; (adv) blushingly, ablush. ANTONYM: (adj) pale

blushingly: (adv) blush, ruddily, rosily, blushfully, redly, shily, overmodestly

boards: (n) timber, arena, table, stage, fence, floor

bodice: (n) corsage, stays, corset, brassiere, top, slip, waist, corselet

bodily: (adj) material, corporeal, corporal, animal, carnal, somatic, real, personal, sensual; (adv) altogether, fleshly. ANTONYMS: (adj) mental, spiritual, soulful, intellectual; (adv) mentally

boiled: (adj) intoxicated, poached, stewed; (v) sodden

boiling: (adj) hot, ebullient, heated, burning, scalding, torrid, humid; (adj, v) effervescent; (v) seethe, effervesce; (n) ebullience. ANTONYMS: (adj) cold, happy, frozen, cooled, cool, collected, calm, fresh, airy

bold: (adj) adventurous, audacious, manly, arrogant, intrepid, fearless, spirited, heroic, daring, courageous, stalwart. ANTONYMS: (adj) timid, modest, afraid, meek, shy, light, courteous, discreet, faint, fearful, abashed

bond: (n) association, alliance, deed, agreement, bail, attachment, joint; (v) bind; (n, v) cement, band, link. ANTONYMS: (v) unstick, open, unfasten, loosen, disconnect, clash; (n) separation, divorce

bondage: (n) thrall, thraldom, thralldom, slavery, captivity, enslavement, duress, restraint, yoke, vassalage; (adj, n) villenage. ANTONYMS: (n) independence, emancipation, freedom

bone: (n) framework, os, skeleton, anatomy, ivory, astragal, true middlings; (adj, n, v) cartilage; (v) swot, gristle, prepare

bonnet: (n) cap, protection, chapeau, tile, wimple, beret, lid, cowling, castor, poke bonnet, sunbonnet

boot: (n, v) kick; (n) boots, Wellingtons, bang, gain, jackboot, buskin, kicking, charge, shoe, bootikin

bordered: (adj) fringed, edged, delimited, surrounded

bordering: (adj) abutting, adjoining, conterminous, contiguous, frontier, next, neighboring, nearby, near, approximate, fringent

bore: (v) dig, tire, pierce, tap, annoy, perforate; (n, v) bother, plague; (n) auger, well, gimlet. ANTONYMS: (v) fascinate, excite, hypnotize, engage, entertain, stimulate; (n) charmer, exciter, excitement, pleasure

borne: (adj) weak, wanting, spoony, soft, sappy, shallow, little, limited

borrow: (v) adopt, lend, appropriate, to borrow, assume, take, accept,

acquire, plagiarize, cadge, get. ANTONYMS: (v) give, invent, loan, originate, return

bosom: (n) heart, interior, boob, thorax, chest, bust, tit; (n, v) embrace; (v) cherish, hug; (adj) intimate. ANTONYMS: (n) outside, exteriority

bossed: (v) nodular, bunchy; (adj) embossed

bother: (n, v) trouble, torment, worry, hassle, pain; (adj, n, v) fuss, bore; (v) vex, annoy, irritate; (n) nuisance. ANTONYMS: (n, v) delight; (v) soothe, please, help, aid, comfort, placate, encourage, defend; (n) accord, satisfaction

bothered: (adj) troubled, disturbed, nervous, distraught, uneasy, concerned, upset, annoyed, harassed, vexed, fazed. ANTONYMS: (adj) peaceful, unconcerned, pleased, serene, untroubled, content

bounden: (adj) bound, indebted, compulsory, binding

bowed: (adj) arched, curved, inclined, crooked, arciform, arching, arced, bandy, arcuate, twisted, bended. ANTONYMS: (adj) straight, concave, plucked

bowing: (n) obeisance, playing, gesticulation, capitulation, genuflection, scraping, submission; (adj) bowed, bent, fawning, submissive

boxes: (n) auditory, pit, parquet, gallery, box, case, front of the house, bleachers, stalls

boyish: (adj) young, puerile, adolescent, youthful, babyish, childish, girlish, kittenish, boylike, callow, immature. ANTONYM: (adj) mature

brandy: (n) applejack, spirits, brandies, liquor, Brandywine, Marc, fruit brandy; (v) brandy smash

brave: (adj, n) bold, hardy; (adj) audacious, fearless, courageous, virile, intrepid, valiant; (adj, v) endure; (v) defy, face. ANTONYMS: (adj) cowardly, frightened, pathetic, gutless, afraid, cautious, fainthearted, meek, mousy, nervous; (v) skip

brawn: (n) beef, strength, force, sinew, power, might, meat, flesh, muscles, vigor, energy. ANTONYMS: (n) weakness, leanness, scrawniness

brawny: (adj, n) hefty, burly; (adj) strong, athletic, sturdy, strapping, beefy, powerful, robust, stalwart, mighty. ANTONYMS: (adj) skinny, puny, weak, frail, powerless, delicate, feeble

breadth: (n) width, spread, amplitude, wideness, size, length, latitude, extent, area, broadness, stretch. ANTONYMS: (n) length, longitude, emptiness, thinness

break-up: (n) split, estrangement

breathed: (adj) unvoiced, inaudible, breathing, aphonic

breathing: (adj) animate, live, living, respiratory, alive, above ground; (v) breathe, respire; (n) respiration, instant, moment. ANTONYMS: (adj) inanimate, breathless, dead

breeches: (n) knickers, inexpressibles, knickerbockers, brogues, short, smalls, overalls, small clothes, pants, trousers, pantaloons

breed: (n) variety, race, kind, ancestry, sort, order, species; (v) engender, multiply, beget, bear. ANTONYMS: (v) destroy, eradicate, ignore, kill, neglect, quell

breeze: (n) breath, air, gust, gale, flurry, zephyr, rumor, wind, blow, bise; (v) move

brethren: (n) congregation, assembly, brother, people, laity, family, flock, fold

brewing: (v) preparing, forthcoming, culinary art, brooding; (n) production; (adj) impending, destined, imminent

bribe: (n) bribery, boodle, lure, payment, payoff; (v) corrupt, fix, pay off, pervert, blackmail; (n, v) reward

brick: (n) adobe, block, rough diamond, ugly duckling, lump, unit, red; (adj) trump, concrete; (v) pot, terra cotta

bricks: (n) walk, highway

bridal: (adj, v) spousal; (adj, n) wedding; (n) nuptials, matrimony, espousal, hymen, marriage ceremony, adoption, betrothal; (v) hymeneal; (adj) marriage. ANTONYM: (adj) unmarried

bride: (n) fiance, Bridget, Brigid, saint Brigid, saint Bridget, honeymooner, prioress, newlywed, participant, wife, bridegroom. ANTONYMS: (n) bridegroom, groom

bridegroom: (v) bride; (n) honeymooner, newlywed, participant, fiance, husband. ANTONYM: (n) wife

brightness: (n) luminance, light, shine, clarity, lustre, glow, glare, glitter, luminosity; (n, v) illumination, gloss. ANTONYMS: (n) cloudiness, murkiness, dimness, darkness, mistiness, softness, sadness, bleakness, dirtiness, pessimism; (adv) seriously

brooklet: (v) streamlet; (n) creek

brotherhood: (n) fraternity, sodality, association, kinship, relationship, friendliness, confraternity, fellowship, organization, partnership, society

brotherly: (adj) brotherlike, sympathetic, cordial, neighborly, harmonious, amicable, affectionate, sisterly, fatherly; (adv) sympathetically, fraternally. ANTONYMS: (adj) sisterly, uncompassionate, unfriendly, unneighborly, sororal, antagonistic, uncompanionable

brow: (n) peak, brink, brows, height, summit, forehead, eyebrow, edge, crown, brim, border. ANTONYM: (n) trough

brownish: (n) bronze, tan; (adj) chromatic, subfuscous

browsing: (n) feeding, eating, reading, bruting

bruise: (n, v) hurt, wound; (v) crush, pound, mash, contuse, grind, bray; (n) contusion, hematoma; (adj, n) buffet

bruised: (adj) wounded, hurt, raw, sore, livid, tender, sensitive, rotten, surbet, sore to the touch, painful

brunt: (n) jolt, onset, push, shock, thrust, throw, impact, strain, blow, bang; (adj) stress

brush: (n, v) broom, touch, kiss; (v) sweep, polish, graze, clean; (n) brushwood, conflict, copse, encounter

brutality: (n) atrocity, barbarity, violence, cruelty, ferocity, savageness, harshness, callousness, viciousness, ferociousness, savagery. ANTONYMS: (n) friendliness, kindness, caring, gentility, humaneness, humanity

bucket: (n) pail, container, bucketful, scoop, tankard, pipkin, skeel, mug, pan, can; (v) rain cats and dogs

bulk: (n) size, mass, volume, majority, amount, capacity, quantity, dimension, magnitude, thickness; (adj, n) lump. ANTONYMS: (n) minority, lightness

bull: (n) rot, ox, hogwash, absurdity, bear, buck, guff, shit, male; (n, v) bullshit; (adj, n) blunder.

ANTONYMS: (n) truth, bear
bundle: (n, v) pack, cluster, clump, wad; (n) sheaf, pile, batch, stack, package, group, heap. ANTONYMS: (v) scatter, separate, disperse, divide
bungling: (adj) clumsy, maladroit, incompetent, gawky, unskilled, bumbling, inept, ungainly, bunglesome, untrained, unproductive. ANTONYMS: (adj) competent, efficient
bureau: (n) office, authority, chest, division, department, desk, dresser, commode, chest of drawers, chambers, burr
burglary: (n) housebreaking, theft, felony, breaking and entering, stealing, robbery, thieving, crime, depredation, holdup, burglar
burial: (v) bury, funebrial; (n) sepulture, entombment, burying, inhumation, funeral, concealment, sepulcher, hiding, committal
buried: (adj) hidden, covert, interred, underground, inhumed, profound, covered, ulterior; (v) perdu, imbed, embed. ANTONYMS: (adj) explicit, overt
burly: (adj) rugged, beefy, brawny, strapping, hefty, muscular, husky, stout, strong; (adv) beefily, sturdily. ANTONYMS: (adj) slight, skinny, thin, slim, small, anorexic, feeble, delicate, weak
burning: (adj) blazing, ablaze, boiling, afire, flaming, hot; (n) combustion, firing; (adj, n) passionate, zealous, glowing. ANTONYMS: (adj) cold, trivial, cool, out, painless, quenched, soothing, unimportant, apathetic, insignificant, unconcerned
burnt: (adj) adust, heated, baked, torrid, sunburnt, seared, scorched, well done, tempered, overdone, combust. ANTONYMS: (adj) underdone, unburned, wet
burst: (adj, n, v) crack; (adj, v) split, blow up, explode, splinter, detonate; (n, v) rupture, blast; (adj, n) flash; (v) break out, belch. ANTONYMS: (v) attach, join, connect, fasten, trickle
bury: (v) inter, overwhelm, lay to rest, hide, mask, secrete, conceal, cloak, entomb, suppress; (n) burial. ANTONYMS: (v) exhume, unearth, uncover, dig, disclose, distract, expose, ignore, reveal, air, remember
burying: (n) entombment, inhumation
bushes: (n) underbrush, thicket, undergrowth, minor league
bushy: (adj) dense, shagged, shaggy, hairy, bearded, brushy, gross, bushies, pilous, pappous, hispid. ANTONYMS: (adj) bald, neat, unhealthy, tidy, thin, sparse, sleek
busily: (adv) actively, occupiedly, briskly, industriously, engagedly, energetically, assiduously, lively, officiously, fussily, meddlesomely. ANTONYM: (adv) inactively
bustling: (adj) lively, busy, boisterous, buzzing, brisk, alive, vibrant, noisy, tumultuous; (v) stirring, full of incident. ANTONYM: (adj) inactive
butcher: (v) slaughter, kill, murder, slay; (n, v) massacre, botch; (n) assassin, bungler, slaughterer, meatman, murderer. ANTONYMS: (v) develop, create, grow, build
butter: (v) gloze, slaver, flatter; (adj) butyraceous, dough, pudding; (n) fat, scrapper, fighter, oil, tallow
button: (n, v) knob; (adj, n) tie; (n) knop, push button, push, key, fastening, clasp, bud, buckle; (v) fasten
buzz: (n, v) rumor, call, ring, hiss, drone, gossip, purr, whisper, murmur; (n) report, hearsay. ANTONYM: (n) bore
cadence: (n) beat, tempo, measure, rhythm, cadency, descent, time; (n, v) pace; (v) gait, step, rate
cajolery: (n) cajolement, blarney, adulation, enticement, palaver, flattery, persuasion, wheedling, humbug, soft soap, allurement
calculable: (adj) computable, numerable, arithmetical, analytic, algebraic, measurable, reckonable, countable, estimable, able to be gauged, assessable. ANTONYMS: (adj) incalculable, inestimable
calculated: (adj) purposeful, intentional, intended, conscious, premeditated, planned, measured, strategic; (adj, v) studied; (v) advised, designed. ANTONYMS: (adj) ingenuous, spontaneous, casual
calendar: (n) agenda, the calendar, schedule, diary, journal, timetable, program, Calendar year, system, organization; (n, v) list
calf: (n) calves, calfskin, sura, foal, shorthorn, pup, kitten, colt, leather, kid, box calf
callous: (adj) heartless, insensible, relentless, cruel, brutal, obdurate, hard, hardened, hardhearted, indifferent, insensitive. ANTONYMS: (adj) caring, merciful, compassionate, sensitive, sympathetic, tender, nice, thoughtful, affectionate, concerned, flattering
calm: (adj, n, v) assuage, appease, lull; (adj, v) cool, pacify, peaceful, easy, steady; (adj, adv, n, v) still; (n, v) allay; (v) mollify. ANTONYMS: (adj) agitated, wild, stormy, nervous, angry, scared, terrified, tense; (v) agitate, provoke; (adj, v) upset
calmness: (n) calm, composure, quietness, poise, serenity, stillness, quiet, silence, placidity, peace; (adj, n) coolness. ANTONYMS: (n) anxiety, nervousness, restlessness, panic, fury, unrest, intensity, discomposure, bustle, annoyance, noise
candle: (n) candela, light, taper, bougie, CD, candlepower, lamp, wax light, Standard candle; (v) examine, illuminate
candour: (n) candidness, frankness, forthrightness, fairness, rectitude, purity, straightforwardness, equity, truth, sincerity, simplicity
canvass: (n, v) campaign, discuss; (n) review; (v) beg, examine, scrutinize, view, agitate, inspect, survey, study. ANTONYM: (v) neglect
capacious: (adj) large, big, ample, roomy, broad, extensive, vast, commodious, voluminous, wide, expansive. ANTONYMS: (adj) small, confined, squeezed, tiny
capped: (adj) crowned
caps: (n) brevier, bourgeois, pica boldface
careless: (adj) forgetful, inattentive, insouciant, haphazard, cursory, reckless, lax, unwary, sloppy; (adj, adv) thoughtless; (adj, v) heedless. ANTONYMS: (adj) cautious, prudent, meticulous, thoughtful, diligent, attentive, thorough, wary, guarded, methodical, strict
carelessly: (adv) incautiously, hastily, recklessly, heedlessly, casually, sloppily, imprudently, inconsiderately, rashly, negligently, unwarily. ANTONYMS: (adv) thoroughly, diligently, carefully, warily, laboriously, thoughtfully, attentively, daintily, methodically, discreetly, economically
carelessness: (n) negligence, inattention, indifference, nonchalance, thoughtlessness,

abandon, incaution, disregard, omission, forgetfulness, dereliction. ANTONYMS: (n) attention, caution, alertness, vigilance, carefulness, thoughtfulness, assiduousness, economy, regard, prudence, forethought

caress: (v) stroke, fondle, tickle, pat, pet, kiss, nuzzle, cuddle, coddle; (n, v) touch; (n) endearment. ANTONYM: (n) hit

caressingly: (adv) caressively, kissingly

caring: (adj) tender, affectionate, loving, fond, compassionate, concerned, sympathetic, kind, solicitous, considerate, obliging. ANTONYMS: (adj) uncaring, unfeeling, callous, flippant, unkind, inhumane, hardhearted, unhelpful, thoughtless, rough, paternal

carol: (n, v) chant; (n) canticle, song, canzonet, ballad, strain, Christmas carol, hymn, cantata; (v) warble, sing

carpet: (v) cover, drape, rebuke, encase, row, chew out; (n) rug, carpeting, tapis, runner, covering

carping: (adj, v) captious, critical, censorious; (adj) hypercritical, picky, irritable, querulous; (n) faultfinding, criticism, cavil, censoriousness

carriage: (n) attitude, conveyance, cab, air, walk, position, mien, shipping; (n, v) transport, behavior, port

cart: (n) car, carriage, handcart, barrow, applecart, wagon; (v) haul, drag, bear, take, transfer

casket: (n) box, coffin, chest, sarcophagus, coffer, caddy, bier, gasket, reliquary, desk; (v) enclose

casting: (n) cast, hurl, pouring, molding, teeming, block, Malleable castings, fling, to throw something a long distance, flinging, pelt

casual: (adj) adventitious, careless, chance, occasional, nonchalant, irregular, easy, cursory, coincidental, passing, random. ANTONYMS: (adj) deliberate, formal, thorough, careful, rushed, premeditated, predetermined, planned, serious, permanent, intense

casualties: (n) victims, injuries and deaths, sufferer, toll, victim

catalepsy: (adj) trance, catalepsis, fixity, immobility

cataleptic: (adj) out cold, comatose, insensible

catching: (adj) communicable, infectious, epidemic, gripping, transferable, zymotic; (n) discovery, take, playing, uncovering, getting. ANTONYM: (adj) noncommunicable

catechise: (v) catechize, learn, teach, instruct, examine, question, ask

cats: (n) Felidae, cates, public, people, order Carnivora, fissiped mammal, fissiped, Carnivora, bears, badgers, family Felidae

cautious: (adj) guarded, conservative, prudent, watchful, attentive, reserved, shy, provident, judicious, circumspect, chary. ANTONYMS: (adj) rash, open, impulsive, impetuous, careless, irresponsible, wasteful, incautious, thoughtless, imprudent, unwary

cautiously: (adv) guardedly, prudently, warily, circumspectly, charily, discreetly, vigilantly, timidly, attentively, watchfully, sparingly. ANTONYMS: (adv) openly, irresponsibly, imprudently, bravely, recklessly, incautiously, thoughtlessly, wastefully, tactlessly, rashly, liberally

cease: (n, v) end, finish, stop; (v) quit, terminate, break, break off, close, conclude, discontinue, abstain. ANTONYMS: (v) begin, start, commence, persist, stay

ceased: (adj) finished

ceasing: (n) stopping, subsidence

celebration: (n) anniversary, holiday, fair, solemnization, festival, commemoration, merrymaking, feast, party, festivity; (adj, n) dedication. ANTONYM: (n) omission

censure: (n, v) accuse, reprimand, reproach, attack, animadversion, abuse; (n) accusation, condemnation; (v) carp, condemn, berate. ANTONYMS: (v) approve, commend, allow, endorse, laud, permit, sanction; (n) approval, blessing, commendation; (n, v) compliment

centred: (adj) centralized, concentrated, focused, focussed, centralised; (n) carbon, c, hundred, century, one C

centring: (n) centering, centres

ceremony: (n) courtesy, celebration, ceremonial, parade, pomp, rite, ceremonies, manners, custom, ritual, pageant. ANTONYMS: (n) modesty, understatement

certainty: (n) assurance, sureness, certain, trust, confidence, fact, reliability, surety, security, reality, certitude. ANTONYMS: (n) doubt, unpredictability, indecisiveness, skepticism, unknown, idealism, vagueness, fantasy, feeling, hesitation, insecurity

certified: (adj) accredited, official, guaranteed, authorized, approved, certificated, certifiable, verified, assured, licensed, clear. ANTONYMS: (adj) informal, uncertified, amateur, uncertain, unqualified

certitude: (n) assurance, trust, conviction, determination, persuasion, faith, security, firmness, assuredness, resolution, confidence. ANTONYM: (n) indecision

cessation: (n) pause, abatement, close, stop, respite, suspension, surcease, standstill, rest, termination; (n, v) death. ANTONYMS: (n) beginning, continuation, commencement, persistence

chafed: (adj) uncomfortable, sore, painful, galled, angry; (v) fretted, agitated

chairs: (n) seats

chamber: (n) hall, bedchamber, cavity, cell, council, compartment, assembly, apartment, ventricle, dormitory, cubicle

chambers: (n) bureau, consulting room, countinghouse, apartment, lodging, suite

changeful: (adj) fluid, fickle, capricious, astatic, variable, volatile, unstable, mercurial, mobile, unsettled, erratic

channels: (n) canals, course, form, routine, conduct, process, method

chapel: (n) chantry, worship, shrine, kirk, temple, house of God, house of worship, meetinghouse, oratory, place of worship, tabernacle

charm: (n, v) allure, captivate, appeal, spell, fascinate, bewitch, conjure; (adj, v) attract; (n) amulet; (v) enchant, entrance. ANTONYMS: (n) ugliness, repulsion, repulsiveness, awkwardness, hatefulness, unpleasantness; (v) repulse, offend, irritate, disgust, bore

charmed: (adj) enchanted, delighted, fascinated, spellbound, entranced, captive, beguiled, infatuated, absorbed, enamored, captive hours

charming: (adj) beautiful, lovely, captivating, winning, attractive, enchanting, delightful, pleasing,

nice, magic, cute. ANTONYMS: (adj) repellent, unpleasant, unappealing, repulsive, charmless, disgusting, gross, irritating, offensive, uninteresting, annoying

charms: (n) trinkets, jewelry, jewels

charter: (n, v) permit, let; (v) rent, lease, take, engage, get; (n) authority, license, law, code. ANTONYMS: (v) cancel, buy, purchase

chary: (adj) careful, cagey, cagy, guarded, frugal, wary, reluctant, safe, stingy, watchful, illiberal. ANTONYMS: (adj) careless, rash, imprudent, reckless, heedless, trusting, forgetful, unwary, eager

chase: (v) pursue, trail, follow, track, stalk, expel, banish, go after; (n, v) hunt, search; (n) game. ANTONYMS: (v) escape, lead, find, precede

chasm: (n) breach, gap, hiatus, gulf, ravine, hole, abysm, vacancy, canyon, aperture, emptiness. ANTONYMS: (n) junction, closure

chastise: (v) castigate, chasten, correct, reprimand, punish, criticize, beat, scold, chew out, flog; (n, v) scourge. ANTONYMS: (v) comfort, bless, commend, promote, reward, encourage

chastised: (adj) corrected

chatter: (n, v) babble, gossip, prattle, gab, cackle, natter; (adj, n, v) jabber; (adj, v) prate, palaver; (v) blabber, patter. ANTONYM: (v) drawl

cheating: (n) cheat, dishonesty, imposition, imposture, fraud, duplicity, deception, chicanery; (adj) dirty, cunning, deceiving. ANTONYMS: (adj) honest, faithful; (n) honesty, truthfulness

checked: (adj) checkered, chequered, check, plaid, examine, temperate, tartan, silent, safe, pent-up, numbered

cheek: (n) audacity, nerve, brass, boldness, impertinence, face, lip, mouth, gall, insolence, impudence. ANTONYMS: (n) respect, cowardice, timidity, humbleness, meekness, reticence, seriousness; (v) praise

cheeks: (n) Gemini, twins, couple, posterior, pair, deuce, two, duet

cheer: (v) animate, applaud, amuse, hearten, inspire, lighten; (n, v) comfort, delight, cry; (adj, v) embolden; (n) consolation. ANTONYMS: (n) sadness, boo, uncheerfulness, hiss, pessimism, raspberry; (v) depress, discourage, dissuade, complain, jeer

cheerful: (adj, v) buoyant; (adj) breezy, merry, optimistic, pleasant, glad, blithe, carefree, bright, lively, happy. ANTONYMS: (adj) depressed, gloomy, sad, depressing, grim, hopeless, miserable, morose, somber, dejected, unwelcoming

cheerfully: (adj, adv) gladly; (adv, v) happily; (adv) merrily, readily, brightly, jovially, cheerily, genially, chirpily, lively, blithely. ANTONYMS: (adv) bleakly, dismally, grimly, sullenly, unhappily, somberly, sadly, grudgingly, gloomily, dourly, forlornly

cheerfulness: (n) glee, happiness, exhilaration, hilarity, mirth, merriment, gladness, cheer, good spirits, pleasure, joviality. ANTONYMS: (n) sadness, grimness, seriousness, misery, resentment, uncheerfulness, solemnity, lethargy, bleakness, gravity, gloominess

cheeriness: (n) happiness, optimism, joyfulness, joy, buoyancy, jollity, jolliness, fun, good cheer, geniality, cheer. ANTONYMS: (n) sulkiness, gloominess, misery

cheerless: (adj) sad, dismal, dark, drab, dreary, gloomy, dull, murky, dispiriting; (adj, v) disconsolate, joyless. ANTONYMS: (adj) bright, happy, uplifting, lighthearted, sunny, smart, cheery, warm

cheese: (n) cheddar, cottage cheese, blue cheese, brick cheese, Brie, Camembert, Cheddar cheese, cheeseflower, bleu, Edam, exaggeration

cherishing: (n) love, conservation

cherubic: (adj) seraphic, angelical, heavenly, cherubical, lovable, saintly, innocent, holy, sweet, beatific, cherubin

chickens: (n) Galliformes, order Galliformes

chiefly: (adv) principally, primarily, above all, especially, headly, mostly, largely, primely, predominantly; (adj, adv) mainly, particularly. ANTONYM: (adv) partially

childish: (adj) childlike, naive, babyish, immature, simple, puerile, infantile, juvenile, silly, frivolous, young. ANTONYMS: (adj) sensible, old, wise, adult, jaded

childless: (adj) sterile, unfruitful, issueless, infertile, bare, bereaved, bleak, unkind, unproductive, orbate

chill: (adj, v) cool; (adj, n) cold; (adj) bleak, icy, chilly, frosty, depressing; (v) freeze, dispirit, damp; (n) coolness. ANTONYMS: (adj, v) warm; (n) warmth, warmness; (v) encourage, hearten, inspirit, thaw; (adj) hot, gregarious, friendly, sociable

chilled: (adj) frozen, freezing, cool, refrigerated, icy, inhibited, restrained, confined, shivering, iced, stiff

chin: (n) jaw, Kuki, jawbone, lineament, rap, jowl; (v) elevate, speak, chin up, confer, bring up

chirp: (n, v) chirrup, peep; (v) sing, trill, chitter, warble, carol, emit, whistle, utter; (adj) take heart

choir: (n) quire, chancel, choral society, choral group, crypt, Golgotha, nave, transept, vestry, chorister, ensemble

choosing: (n) picking, pick, selection, option, election, appointment, volition; (v) choose

christen: (v) entitle, baptize, dub, name, baptise, designate, style, term, specify, define, denominate

christening: (n) naming, denomination, chrism, designation, identification

christianity: (n) Catholicism, catholicity, Adventism, Christian church, Christian religion; (v) acquire, bear, assume, arrogate, adopt, accept

chuckling: (n) laughter

churchyard: (n) graveyard, burial ground, yard, necropolis, cloisters, kirkyard

circumstance: (n) affair, incident, matter, event, occasion, chance, accident, opportunity, adventure, casualty, fact

clad: (adj) dressed, attired, clothed, coated, garbed; (n) cladding; (prep) gowned; (v) costume, shod, dress, attire. ANTONYMS: (adj) undressed, unclothed

claiming: (adj) pressing

clasping: (adj) tendril

claws: (v) tentacle, tenaculum, unguis, hook, fangs, teeth; (n) clutches, jaws

clay: (n) soil, remains, adobe, loam, dust, dirt, mud, bentonite, ashes; (adj, n) pottery; (adj) earthen

cleared: (adj) absolved, clean, empty, exculpated, bleak, innocent, exempt, vindicated, exonerated, guiltless, let off. ANTONYMS: (adj) full, uncleared, guilty

clearing: (n) clarification, clearance, purgation, purging, purge, clear-melting, correction, tract, improvement, release, freeing
clearness: (n) clarity, brightness, distinctness, perspicuity, lucidity, explicitness, sharpness, simplicity, purity, limpidity, intelligibility. ANTONYMS: (n) ambiguity, opacity, dirtiness, vagueness, unclearness, obscureness, indistinctness, clutter, haziness, mustiness
cleave: (adj, v) adhere, cohere; (v) split, divide, burst, stick, tear, sever, rive, cling, break. ANTONYMS: (v) forsake, abandon, meld, relinquish, separate, unite, attach
clenched: (adj) tight, clinched
clergyman: (n) minister, chaplain, priest, pastor, churchman, preacher, parson, rector, dominie, vicar; (adj) divine. ANTONYMS: (n) layman, layperson
clerical: (adj) accounting, bookkeeping, administrative, church, ministerial, priestly, sacerdotal, secretarial; (n) minister, preacher, office. ANTONYM: (adj) lay
clerk: (n, v) writer, secretary, transcriber; (n) servant, shop assistant, salesclerk, employee, accountant, recorder; (v) scrivener, scribe
clever: (adj) capable, acute, intelligent, able, apt, expert, skillful, cunning, sharp; (adj, v) brilliant, smart. ANTONYMS: (adj) clumsy, unintelligent, dim, dull, inept, thick, naive, idiotic, moronic, incompetent, open
cleverness: (n) ingenuity, adroitness, wisdom, aptitude, acumen, intelligence, skill, dexterity, astuteness, brightness, smartness. ANTONYMS: (n) slowness, clumsiness, imbecility, foolishness, ineptness, simplicity, straightforwardness, uselessness, frankness
clew: (n) cue, clod, glob, knob, footmark, footprint, vestige; (v) point out; (adj) pellet, globule, Pelote
click: (n, v) clack, tick; (n) catch, chink, dog, detent, pawl, clink; (v) chatter, beat, cluck
cliff: (adj, n) precipice; (n) boulder, hill, escarpment, promontory, crag, mountain, bank, face; (adj) wall, pike
climax: (n, v) peak, crown; (n) top, zenith, culmination, acme, height, summit, pinnacle, meridian; (adj, n) orgasm. ANTONYMS: (v) dip, drop, delve; (n) low, nadir, bathos, anticlimax, comedown, base, trough, prelude
climbing: (n) climb, ascension, mounting, mountain climbing, mountaineering, rock climbing, acclivity; (v) ascending, uprise, arise; (adj) scandent
cling: (v) adhere, cleave, stick, cohere, hang, attach, grasp, adjoin, clutch, grip, hold. ANTONYMS: (v) detach, repel, unfasten
clinging: (adj) adhering, sticky, adherent, devoted, adhering closely, affectionate, dependent, tenacious, osculant; (n) coherence
closet: (n) cupboard, cubicle, cell, latrine, bathroom, wardrobe, water closet; (adj) clandestine, confidential, secret, private. ANTONYM: (adj) open
cloth: (n) drapery, fabric, clothes, clothing, rag, stuff, linen, tapestry, silk, flannel; (v) napkin
clothed: (adj) dressed, wrapped, cloaked, robed, covered, attired, vested, absorbed, decent; (v) accustomed, arrayed. ANTONYM: (adj) unclothed
clothing: (n) attire, threads, outfit, gear, dress, cloth, duds, habit, wear; (n, v) apparel, vesture
cloud: (n, v) mist, blur; (v) becloud, obscure, eclipse, blacken, taint, befog, overshadow; (adj, n) swarm; (n) haze. ANTONYMS: (v) clear, refine, accentuate, illuminate, explain, clarify, unveil
clouds: (n) exhaust, fumes, gas, smoke, vapors
clue: (n, v) tip; (n) cue, hint, sign, suggestion, signal, guide, token, indication, key, vestige. ANTONYM: (v) hide
clumsy: (adj) bumbling, bungling, cumbersome, unwieldy, rude, inept, inapt, maladroit, gawky, unskilled, wooden. ANTONYMS: (adj) graceful, dexterous, clever, skillful, deft, adroit, elegant, coordinated, expert, athletic, agile
clutch: (n, v) clasp, grip, clench, grasp, hold, clinch, gripe; (v) grab, grapple, embrace; (adj, v) catch. ANTONYMS: (n) loose; (v) release, unfasten
clutched: (adj) tense, worried, anxious, neurotic
coarse: (adj) vulgar, boorish, rough, brutal, crude, gross, common, earthy, blunt, bawdy; (adj, v) harsh. ANTONYMS: (adj) sophisticated, refined, smooth, polite, soft, civil, cultured, delicate, fine, genteel, gentlemanly
coaxing: (n) blarney, flattery, sweet talk, temptation, enticement, soft soap; (adv) coaxingly; (adj) ingratiatory, persuasive, oily
cogent: (adj) weighty, powerful, pithy, strong, telling, persuasive, forcible, forceful, compelling, conclusive; (adj, v) convincing. ANTONYMS: (adj) confused, weak, ineffective, impotent, invalid, irrational
coiffure: (n) hairdo, hairstyle, hair style, beehive, chignon, haircut; (v) coiffe, coif, arrange, groom; (n, v) trim
coin: (v) invent, mint, originate, create, strike, cast; (n, v) forge; (n) specie, money, penny, piece
coins: (v) coinage; (n) hard cash, money, loose change, small change, legal tender, ready money
coldly: (adv) frigidly, icily, coolly, indifferently, frostily, distantly, gelidly, reservedly, bleakly, wintrily, frozenly. ANTONYMS: (adv) warmly, affectionately, sympathetically, sensitively, kindly, cheerfully, emotionally
coldness: (n) chilliness, coolness, indifference, distance, apathy, iciness, reserve, frost, frigidity, unconcern; (adj, n) cold. ANTONYMS: (n) friendliness, sympathy, sensitivity, hotness, heat, responsiveness, concern, brightness, kindness
colic: (n) Uterine colic , gripe, hurting, mulligrubs, pain, stomach pain, tummy ache, newborn colic, enteralgia, intestinal colic, tummy pain
collateral: (n) warranty, guarantee, mortgage, guaranty, security, pledge, bond; (adj) secondary, indirect, oblique, subsidiary. ANTONYMS: (adj) primary, chief, fundamental, principal, lineal
collogue: (v) confabulate, confab, conspire, consult, earwig, talk, confer
colly: (v) begrime, bemire, blemish, muddy, mire, splash, soil, polluting, spot, pollute, spotted
coltsfoot: (n) Tussilago farfara, herb, galax, beetleweed

comb: (v) brush, ransack, search, dress, eliminate, groom; (adj) weed; (n) crest, combing, caruncle, currycomb
comer: (n) newcomer, arriver, traveler, traveller, contender, competitor, competition, visitor, whiz kid, Young Turk; (adj) fresh
comfortably: (adv) easily, pleasantly, cosily, conveniently, easy, snugly, richly, advantageously, leisurely, well, wealthily. ANTONYMS: (adv) uncomfortably, awkwardly, unpleasantly
comforts: (n) amenities, bread and butter, convenience, conveniences
comical: (adj) funny, comic, laughable, absurd, humorous, ridiculous, zany, droll, jocose, grotesque, jocular. ANTONYMS: (adj) tragic, sad, grave, solemn, unfunny, dull, sensible
commit: (v) consign, assign, charge, confide, dedicate, apply, entrust, submit, intrust, leave, give. ANTONYMS: (v) stop, desist, divest, end, idle, withhold, wait, cease, keep, refuse
commonly: (adv) ordinarily, usually, generally, customarily, normally, habitually, regularly, plebeianly, currently, popularly, publicly. ANTONYMS: (adv) unusually, uncommonly, seldom, narrowly, tastefully, specifically
communion: (n) communication, denomination, intercourse, alliance, Eucharist, faction, sacrament, traffic, sharing, fellowship, Holy Communion. ANTONYMS: (n) hostility, disunity, distance, disagreement, alienation, contention
compacted: (adj) solid, packed together, hard, packed down, trampled, massive, summary, flattened, trodden, packed in, crushed
compactly: (adv) solidly, succinctly, closely, thickly, tightly, firmly, heavily, neatly, pithily, concisely, trimly. ANTONYMS: (adv) loosely, sparsely, awkwardly
companion: (adj, n) associate; (n) colleague, buddy, mate, peer, chum, partner, fellow, comrade, assistant, brother. ANTONYMS: (n) foe, stranger, adversary
companions: (n) circle, entourage, people
companionship: (n) company, society, fellowship, camaraderie, partnership, friendship, fraternity, amity, coexistence, brotherhood, communion. ANTONYMS: (n) animosity, enmity, solitude
comparative: (adj) qualified, proportionate, illustrative, approximate, near. ANTONYMS: (adj) absolute, unlike, far, unequal
compassion: (adj, n) clemency, kindness; (n) mercy, charity, sympathy, commiseration, remorse, tenderness, forgiveness, feeling, grace. ANTONYMS: (n) indifference, disregard, unconcern, severity, nastiness, harshness, incomprehension, malevolence, coldness, roughness, inhumanity
compelled: (adj) forced, obligate, enforced, constrained, responsible, answerable, unwilling, destined
compensate: (v) recompense, pay, reimburse, atone, counterbalance, remunerate, repay, reward, recoup, cover, correct. ANTONYMS: (v) damage, wrong, forfeit, deprive, fine, receive
complacency: (n) contentment, conceit, satisfaction, self-satisfaction, comfort, entire satisfaction, peace of mind, gratification; (adj) amiability, soft tongue, mansuetude
complacent: (adj) self-satisfied, contented, smug, satisfied, gracious, accommodating, comfortable, placid, proud, arrogant, self-righteous. ANTONYMS: (adj) dissatisfied, discontented, insecure, modest, troubled, uneasy, unsatisfied, concerned, anxious
complacently: (adv) contently, conceitedly, self-satisfiedly, graciously, arrogantly, satisfiedly, contentedly, virtuously, sanctimoniously
complexion: (n, v) tint; (n) cast, character, appearance, look, hue, aspect, flush, glow, dye, fashion
complexity: (n) complication, intricacy, complicacy, involution, elaboration, convolution, complex, complexness, confusion, muddle; (adj, n) entanglement. ANTONYMS: (n) clarity, straightforwardness, simpleness
complicated: (adj, v) intricate; (adj) elaborate, hard, complicate, difficult, sophisticated, awkward, convoluted, obscure, deep; (v) involved. ANTONYMS: (adj) straightforward, clear, easy, plain, primitive, direct, amicable, basic
compliment: (n, v) praise, honor; (v) laud, flattery, applaud, greet, adulation, congratulate, belaud; (n) eulogy, tribute. ANTONYMS: (n) criticism, reproach, disparagement; (n, v) slander, libel; (v) criticize, denounce, disparage, denigrate, complain, belittle
complimentary: (adj, adv) free, gratis, without charge, at no cost; (adj) gratuitous, adulatory, flattering, costless, approving, on the house; (v) commendatory. ANTONYMS: (adj) disparaging, offensive, disapproving, critical, uncomplimentary, derogatory, denouncing, negative, costly, scornful, unflattering
compliments: (n) respects, commendation, wish, greetings, salutation, respect, applause, flattery, acclamation, regards, approbation
comprehension: (n) knowledge, inclusion, conception, understanding, intelligence, grasp, wit, capacity, familiarity, discernment, uptake. ANTONYMS: (n) incomprehension, ignorance
compressed: (adj) flat, condensed, dense, concentrated, compacted, tight, pointed, packed, concise, close, brief
compromise: (n) arrangement, settlement, concession, accommodation, understanding, adjustment, deal, appeasement; (n, v) bargain; (v) compound; (adj, v) make a compromise. ANTONYMS: (n) disagreement, contention, confrontation, difference; (v) save, quarrel, protect, enhance, differ, support, contest
compunction: (n) repentance, remorse, contrition, qualm, penance, regret, compassion, rue, scruple, sorrow, guilt. ANTONYMS: (n) hardness, indifference, meanness, remorselessness
conceal: (v) hide, disguise, bury, screen, cloak, smother, shield, suppress, mask, obscure; (n, v) veil. ANTONYMS: (v) reveal, show, expose, divulge, clarify, uncover, disclose, tell, admit, spotlight, flaunt
concealing: (n) covering, concealment, burial, stealing, stealth, screening, burying, screenings, activity; (adj) suppressive
concealment: (n) suppression, confidentiality, concealing, secrecy, screen, disguise, hiding, privacy, camouflage, blind, covering.

ANTONYMS: (n) discovery, disclosure, exposure, expression, openness, uncovering, revelation
conception: (n) concept, idea, view, thought, creation, mind, design, imagination, impression, understanding, fancy. ANTONYMS: (n) termination, finish, ending, concrete, abortion, ignorance, destruction
concession: (n) compliance, compromise, discount, agreement, license, yielding, conceding, charter, acceptance; (n, v) grant, allowance. ANTONYMS: (n) fighting, disputation, difference, protest, refusal, denial
conciliatory: (adj) complaisant, pacific, mollifying, propitiatory, friendly, appeasing, conciliating, compromising, pacificatory, assuaging, quiet. ANTONYMS: (adj) provocative, challenging, hostile, aggressive, stubborn, bellicose, belligerent, fighting, antagonizing, uncompromising, antagonistic
conclusions: (n) data
condemned: (adj) censured, convicted, doomed, destined, appropriated, taken, taken over, fated, seized, predestined; (adj, v) guilty
condescend: (adj, v) deign, vouchsafe; (v) stoop, patronize, patronise, descend, lower, interact, decline, bow, agree
condescending: (adj) arrogant, snobbish, superior, haughty, gracious, patronizing, supercilious, arch, benign, affable, merciful. ANTONYMS: (adj) humble, unassuming, approachable, unpretentious, friendly, admiring, modest, respectful, deferential
condescension: (n) arrogance, lordliness, disparagement, patronage, affability, disdain, pride, superciliousness, contempt, stoop, depreciation. ANTONYMS: (n) respect, acceptance, admiration
conducted: (adj) directed, guided
confess: (adj, v) own, allow, admit, avow; (v) concede, profess, recognize, divulge, disclose, reveal, receive. ANTONYMS: (v) suppress, hide, dispute, conceal, repress, harbor
confessed: (adj) known
confessing: (v) confess
confession: (n) admission, acknowledgment, recognition, acknowledgement, concession, divulgence, disclosure, shrift, penance, profession, admission of guilt. ANTONYMS: (n) disavowal, refutation
confined: (adj) limited, cramped, imprisoned, bounded, enclosed, restricted, narrow, constrained, strict; (adj, v) close, invalided. ANTONYMS: (adj) liberated, invasive, roomy, unconfined, unlimited, open, spacious, general
confirm: (v) corroborate, verify, approve, validate, bear out, prove, clinch, assert, demonstrate, authenticate; (adj, v) establish. ANTONYMS: (v) contradict, deny, weaken, cancel, void, veto, undermine, repudiate, question, open, negate
confound: (v) bewilder, baffle, nonplus, perplex, astonish, puzzle, amaze, astound, mistake; (adj, v) confuse, stupefy. ANTONYMS: (v) explain, clarify, comfort, lose, distinguish; (n) understanding
confused: (adj) abashed, baffled, befuddled, bemused, dizzy, chaotic, confounded, deranged, incoherent, disjointed, indistinct. ANTONYMS: (adj) enlightened, orderly, alert, clearheaded, organized, oriented, precise, systematic, ordered, unimpressed, methodical
confusedly: (adv) obscurely, disorderedly, perplexedly, cloudily, dazedly, befuddledly, muddily, bemusedly, dizzily, bewilderedly, puzzledly
congenial: (adj, v) concordant, consonant, accordant; (adj) compatible, affable, kindred, genial, kind, pleasant, pleasing, delightful. ANTONYMS: (adj) uncongenial, unfriendly, disagreeable, hostile, incompatible, despicable, abominable, unsavory, reserved
congratulations: (n) congratulation, recommendation, praise, pean, kudos, eulogy, encomium, commendation, approval; (int) well done, bravo. ANTONYMS: (n) condemnation, criticism, rebuke; (intj) commiserations
congratulatory: (adj) gratulatory, festive, congratulant, triumphant, prideful, glowing, fulsome, admiring, felicitous, commemorative, appreciative
congregation: (n) assembly, gathering, meeting, collection, fold, flock, crowd, convocation, congregating, company; (n, v) assemblage
conjuration: (n) incantation, conjuring, adjuration, invocation, necromancy, spell, black art, glamour, witchcraft, conspiracy, trick
conjuring: (n) magic, hocus-pocus, incantation, sorcery, witchcraft, sleight of hand, adjuration, figgum, conjury, evocation; (adj) magical
connect: (v) bind, bond, join, attach, associate, annex, conjoin, relate, unite, combine, affiliate. ANTONYMS: (v) separate, disconnect, detach, unplug, undo, dissociate, clash, divide, clear
connected: (adj, v) related; (adj) attached, allied, affiliated, coherent, linked, committed, conjoint, combined, relevant, consecutive. ANTONYMS: (adj) unrelated, separate, unimportant, disjoined, unaffiliated, disconnected, unattached, irrelevant
conquering: (adj) triumphant, winning, overcoming, glorious, proud, successful; (n) conquest, seizure, reverse, subjection, subjugation
conscience: (n) moral sense, Conscience money, sense of right and wrong, scruple, intention, tender conscience, small voice, principles, morals, morality, inward monitor. ANTONYM: (n) indifference
consciousness: (n) feeling, sense, conscience, cognizance, mind, notion, knowledge, sensibility, feel, Consciousness of kind, self. ANTONYMS: (n) ignorance, oblivion, certainty, numbness
consenting: (adj) agreeable, yielding, submissive, consentant, compliant, affirmative, accepting; (v) complying, chosen
considerate: (adj, n) thoughtful, benevolent, nice, gentle, sympathetic, humane; (adj) magnanimous, kind, polite, delicate, discreet. ANTONYMS: (adj) uncaring, thoughtless, tactless, inconsiderate, selfish, rude, unkind, unforgiving, offhand, disrespectful, unsympathetic
consolation: (n) comfort, relief, balm, succor, ease, cheer, solacement, encouragement, sympathy, alleviation, express sympathy. ANTONYMS: (n) grief, sorrow, distress, discouragement, aggravation

conspicuous: (adj) apparent, blatant, visible, manifest, obvious, marked, glaring, blazing, flagrant, famous; (adj, v) salient. ANTONYMS: (adj) unobtrusive, unremarkable, unnoticeable, concealed, hidden, indistinct, invisible, secret, unimportant, unseen, doubtful
constable: (n) police officer, policeman, alderman, burgomaster, Petty constable, portreeve, alguazil, gendarme, tipstaff, peon, patrolman
constraint: (n) compulsion, force, restraint, confinement, obligation, restriction, duress, enforcement, pressure, limitation; (adj, n) reserve. ANTONYMS: (n) freedom, boldness, liberation, option, openness, persuasion
consultation: (n) interview, conference, negotiation, counsel, talk, discussion, audience, advisement, council, deliberation, meeting
consumed: (adj) exhausted, finished, used up, worn, depleted, obsessed, possessed, lost, tired, immersed, gone
contained: (adj) implicit, unspoken, unexpressed, latent, understood, numbered, inside, confined to a small area, being within, limited to a small area. ANTONYMS: (adj) unrestrained, generalized, pervasive
contemplate: (v) meditate, speculate, muse, cogitate, ponder, look, deliberate, reflect, gaze, behold, entertain. ANTONYMS: (v) neglect, forget, disregard, ignore, wander, decide
contemplated: (adj) intended, willful
contemplation: (n) consideration, reflection, thought, attention, cogitation, musing, introspection, speculation, animus, deliberation; (n, v) study
contemplative: (adj, v) reflective, pensive, wistful, meditative, introspective; (adj) broody, brooding, speculative, ruminative, musing; (v) museful. ANTONYMS: (adj) shallow, vacuous, blank, thoughtless, disregarding, unreflective, satisfied
contemporaries: (n) coevals, people, contemporary, classmates, colleagues, age group, peer group
contempt: (n, v) scorn; (v) despise; (n) disrespect, derision, mockery, disregard, ridicule, shame, slight, reproach, discourtesy. ANTONYMS: (n) approval, admiration, regard, honor, esteem
contemptuous: (adj) scornful, disdainful, insulting, arrogant, proud, haughty, derisive, cynical, sarcastic, disrespectful; (adj, v) supercilious. ANTONYMS: (adj) approving, complimentary, deferential, humble, polite, respected, admiring
contending: (adj) contentious, conflicting, competitive, competing, competitory, combatant, challenging, factious, militant, warlike, fighting
contented: (adj) content, happy, comfortable, quiet, cheerful, smug, complacent, satisfied, easy, proud, delighted. ANTONYMS: (adj) discontented, unhappy, depressed, unsatisfied, sad, anxious
contentedly: (adv) gladly, satisfiedly, contently, gratifiedly, pleasedly, cheerfully, joyfully, smugly, easily, complacently, placidly. ANTONYMS: (adv) crossly, awkwardly, unhappily, discontentedly, sadly
contention: (n) competition, battle, conflict, argumentation, argument, discord, assertion, controversy, allegation, arguing, difference. ANTONYMS: (n) affection, kindness, friendship, friendliness, agreement, accord, cooperation, denial
contentment: (n) content, happiness, pleasure, fulfillment, ease, delight, comfort, complacency, bliss, joy, contentedness. ANTONYMS: (n) dissatisfaction, sadness, discomfort, discontentment, misery, unhappiness, displeasure, discontent, panic, anxiety
contest: (v) compete, contend; (n) bout, competition, contention; (n, v) combat, conflict, fight, dispute, altercation, struggle. ANTONYMS: (n) tranquility, quiet, peace, calm, cooperation; (v) surrender, agree, acquiesce, accede, favor, prove
contingent: (adj) casual, adventitious, conditional, incidental, fortuitous, chance, random, eventual, circumstantial; (n) team, troop. ANTONYMS: (adj) real, sure, concrete, expected, definite, certain, predictable, unconditional
continually: (adv) perpetually, ceaselessly, incessantly, endlessly, unceasingly, continuously, persistently, eternally, steadily, frequently; (adj, adv) always. ANTONYMS: (adv) acutely, infrequently, spasmodically, sporadically
contour: (n) contour line, outline, form, profile, shape, line, configuration, silhouette, curve, circuit, edge. ANTONYM: (n) core
contracted: (adj) insular, contract, constricted, tight, bound, close, narrow-minded, confined, brief; (v) shrunk; (adj, v) selfish. ANTONYM: (adj) expanded
contracting: (adj) astringent, systolic, contrahent, astringent fruit, austere, binding, constricting; (n) getting, becoming infected, acquiring, employment
contradict: (v) deny, oppose, belie, conflict, confute, controvert, contravene, disprove, refute, invalidate, impugn. ANTONYMS: (v) agree, match, correspond, approve, corroborate, prove, support, reinforce
contradiction: (n) antithesis, denial, repugnance, clash, disproof, contrast, opposite, disagreement, paradox, inconsistency, reverse. ANTONYMS: (n) correspondence, confirmation, consistency, reinforcement, concord
contradictory: (adj) inconsistent, incompatible, contrary, opposite, antagonistic, ironic, repugnant; (adj, n) discordant, disagreeing; (n) contradiction; (v) contradict. ANTONYMS: (adj) consistent, similar, compatible, parallel, agreeing, corresponding, confirming, coherent, corroboratory, reconcilable, sound
contrary: (adj, n) contradictory, reverse; (adj) adverse, conflicting, unfavorable, perverse, cross, disobedient, alien, different, obstinate. ANTONYMS: (adj) similar, harmonious, helpful, obliging, compatible, complaisant, concordant, parallel, agreeable, cooperative, favorable
contrasted: (adj) opposed, antagonistic, opposing, contrary, antipodean, counter, diverse, heterogeneous, opposite, unlike, adverse
contrivance: (n) device, appliance, gadget, artifice, plot, dodge, resource, plan, contraption, machine, apparatus
contrived: (adj) affected, unnatural, false, forced, labored, spurious, feigned, unreal, strained, built,

artificially formal. ANTONYM: (adj) sincere
controversy: (n) contention, argumentation, argument, difference, dispute, conflict, altercation, squabble, row; (n, v) contest, debate. ANTONYMS: (n) agreement, harmony, unanimity, concord
conveniences: (n) creature comforts, comforts, convenience, living, support, livelihood, keep, sustenance, facility, facilities, device
convenient: (adj) comfortable, commodious, handy, appropriate, expedient, timely, fit, useful, nearby, opportune; (adj, n) advantageous. ANTONYMS: (adj) unwieldy, fixed, useless, distant, troublesome, unsuited, remote, unsuitable, unadaptable, unuseful, inappropriate
conveniently: (adv) easily, opportunely, expediently, usefully, fitly, properly, practically, timely, helpfully, commodiously; (adv, v) advantageously. ANTONYMS: (adv) awkwardly, clumsily
conversational: (adj) chatty, conversable, communicative, companionable, informal, garrulous, sociable, voluble, clubbable, talkative, interlocutory. ANTONYMS: (adj) taciturn, written, reticent
conversion: (n) changeover, change, alteration, adaptation, exchange, transformation, commutation, adjustment, reformation, passage; (adj) salvation
convey: (v) communicate, channel, bring, conduct, transfer, fetch, express, transmit, bear, transport, take. ANTONYMS: (v) keep, maintain, withhold, retain, refrain, hold, absorb, receive
conveyed: (v) borne, sent
conviction: (n) belief, confidence, certainty, condemnation, persuasion, faith, trust, certitude, firmness, doctrine, determination. ANTONYMS: (n) acquittal, doubt, release, absolution, disbelief, justification, insecurity, distrust
convince: (v) persuade, convert, sway, reassure, prevail on, induce, entice, argue, convict, win over; (adj, v) satisfy. ANTONYMS: (v) discourage, repel
convinced: (adj, v) sure, positive, confident, firm; (v) cocksure, persuaded, satisfied, assured, bold; (adj) clear, definite. ANTONYMS: (adj) doubtful, unconvinced, uncertain, cynical
convincing: (adj) cogent, forceful, persuasive, compelling, believable, probable, impressive, likely, credible, valid, plausible. ANTONYMS: (adj) weak, unrealistic, unpersuasive, questionable, dubious, doubtful, unbelievable, disputable, inaccurate, hesitant, unreliable
conviviality: (n) merrymaking, joviality, geniality, hospitality, festivity, jollification, sociability, revelry, celebration, friendliness, mirth. ANTONYMS: (n) hostility, shyness, unfriendliness
convulsive: (adj) spastic, galvanic, fitful, paroxysmal, violent, choreic, unsteady, hysterical; (v) unquiet, restless, saltatory
cooking: (adj) culinary; (n) cuisine, food, browning, broiling, culinary art, preparation, gastronomy, chow, frying, groceries
cool: (adj, v) chill, assuage, soothe; (adj) chilly, cold, collected, composed, fine, aloof; (v) quench; (n) poise. ANTONYMS: (v) heat; (adj) hot, agitated, excited, friendly, feverish, enthusiastic, tepid, temperate, bad, upset
cooled: (adj) refrigerated, frozen; (n) cooler
coppice: (n) copse, brush, brake, underwood, thicket, wood, spinney, underbrush, undergrowth, grove, canebrake
coral: (adj) rosy, chromatic; (n) roe, red coral, red, precious coral, madrepore, anthozoan, actinozoan, orange
cord: (n) band, bond, tie, twine, tape, whipcord, thread, yarn, lace, rope, leash
corners: (adj) cornered
corrective: (n) correct, remedy, antidote, device, reclamation; (adj) palliative, remedial, penal, castigatory, amendatory, healing. ANTONYMS: (adj) damaging, harmful, hurtful, injurious
correlation: (n) association, relationship, bond, correspondence, interrelation, link, correlativity, coefficient of correlation, equivalence, comparison; (adj) mutuality. ANTONYMS: (n) contradiction, contrast, clash
correspondence: (n) accord, connection, agreement, communication, coincidence, concord, affinity, parallelism, parallel, similarity, symmetry. ANTONYMS: (n) dissimilarity, asymmetry, disagreement, incongruity, divergence, imbalance, contrast, clash
costume: (n) clothing, clothes, apparel, garb, suit, outfit, uniform, garments, drapery; (n, v) dress; (v) clothe
cotton: (n) absorbent cotton, yarn, thread, cotton cloth, cotton plant, cotton wool, upland cotton, cord, string, fiber; (v) agree
coughing: (n) coughs, breathing out
coulter: (n) colter; (adj) plowshare
countenance: (n) aspect, expression, brow, complexion; (n, v) face, sanction, support, favor; (v) allow, tolerate, uphold. ANTONYMS: (v) reject, oppose, discourage, disapprove, prohibit
counteracting: (adj) antagonist, antagonistic, corrective
counting: (n) calculation, count, reckoning, computation, enumeration, numbering, numeration, tally, nosecount; (adj) calculating, including. ANTONYM: (prep) excluding
countless: (adj) innumerable, multitudinous, many, endless, myriad, measureless, uncounted, legion, untold, infinite, incalculable. ANTONYMS: (adj) finite, limited, numbered, counted, countable, small
courage: (n) audacity, fortitude, boldness, nerve, spirit, backbone, valor, heroism, gallantry, mettle, chivalry. ANTONYMS: (n) cowardice, faintheartedness, weakness, wimpiness, yellowness
courtesy: (adj, n) civility, complaisance; (n) propriety, chivalry, comity, politeness, gallantry, decency, attention, breeding, etiquette. ANTONYMS: (n) rudeness, discourtesy, unkindness, informality, impoliteness, disservice, brusqueness, incivility, vulgarity, crudeness, neglect
cousin: (n) nephew, cousins, friend, cousinship, relation, akin, relative, full cousin, companion
cowardice: (n) dastardliness, poltroonery, pusillanimity, fear, spirit, cravenness, timidity, fearfulness, base fear, cowardship. ANTONYMS: (n) nerve, bravery,

daring, determination
cows: (n) cattle, cow, bull, ox, oxen, Bos Taurus, bullock, beef, Cowes, steer, milker
coyness: (n) shyness, bashfulness, modesty, demureness, restraint, timidity, diffidence, accismus, backwardness, coldness, control. ANTONYM: (n) confidence
crack: (n, v) chink, fracture, split, fissure, crevice, burst, snap, breach, clap, check; (n) cleft. ANTONYMS: (n, v) mend; (v) set, misunderstand, misinterpret, fix, compose; (adj) mediocre, lowly, inferior, deficient
cracked: (adj) nutty, batty, crazy, chapped, balmy, wacky, dotty, crackled, deranged, loony, crackers. ANTONYMS: (adj) resonant, sane
cracking: (n) crack, break, fracture; (adj) splitting, swell, smashing, corking, bully, great, keen, neat. ANTONYMS: (adj) smooth, slow
cradle: (n) cot, birthplace, nursery, berth, crib, nest, hammock, bassinet, origin; (v) hold, groundwork
craft: (n) trade, ability, artfulness, guile, fraud, shift, occupation, vessel, skill; (adj, n) cunning, art. ANTONYMS: (n) naivety, clumsiness, avocation, hobby, incompetence, incompetency, inaptitude, inability, honesty, honestness; (v) destroy
cramp: (v) restrict, constrict, confine, bind, limit, hamper; (n, v) spasm, pinch; (n) crick, pain, constraint. ANTONYMS: (v) allow, permit, liberate; (n) release
crass: (adj) raw, consummate, uncouth, crude, dense, inelegant, gross, rough, churlish, rank, vulgar. ANTONYMS: (adj) sensitive, tactful, kind, nice, delicate, refined, pleasant
cravat: (n) neckerchief, neckcloth, stock, ascot, collar, handkerchief, scarf, neckwear, necktie, ruff
craving: (n) appetite, addiction, appetence, eagerness, hankering, yen, hunger; (n, v) desire, appetency; (adj, n) longing; (adj) eager. ANTONYMS: (n) disgust, hatred, distaste, repulsion, aversion, apathy, disinclination; (adj) unconcerned, disinterested
crawling: (adj, n) creeping; (n) creep, itch; (adj) slow, teeming, thick, swarming, reptant, populous, packed, moving
craziness: (n) foolishness, folly, insanity, lunacy, mania, idiocy, distraction, frenzy, derangement; (adj, n) madness; (adj) aberration
crazy: (adj) wild, mad, brainsick, absurd, eccentric, silly, wacky, cracked, crazed, demented; (adj, n) madcap. ANTONYMS: (adj) sensible, sane, rational, indifferent, stable, reasonable, realistic, balanced, levelheaded, cool, calm
cream: (n, v) best, top, ream; (v) skim; (adj, n) prime, flower, milk; (n) ointment, balm, liniment, elite. ANTONYMS: (n) trash, dregs, worst; (v) lose
crease: (n, v) fold, crinkle, plait, pucker, furrow, line; (v) crumple, cockle, rumple, ruck; (n) pleat. ANTONYMS: (v) iron, flatten
creator: (n) author, originator, producer, maker, inventor, artist, founder, builder, manufacturer, initiator, God. ANTONYM: (n) destructor
creature: (n) being, brute, animal, tool, individual, person, body, entity, human, puppet, somebody
credulous: (adj) gullible, unsuspecting, simple, unsuspicious, unquestioning, green, trusting, unwary, innocent, believing, illogical. ANTONYMS: (adj) suspicious, wary, disbelieving, suspecting, skeptical, cynical, untrusting, shrewd, rational, smart, mistrustful
creed: (n) conviction, gospel, religion, credo, faith, tenet, dogma, doctrine, denomination, persuasion, church doctrine
creep: (v) grovel, sneak, steal, fawn, lurk, truckle, cringe; (n) creeping, crawling, toady, sycophant. ANTONYMS: (v) race, dash, hasten, hurry, speed, fly
crippled: (adj) deformed, game, exhausted, broken, decrepit, crooked, halt, impotent; (n) limping; (v) drooping, flagging. ANTONYMS: (adj) healthy, functioning, fit
criticise: (v) comment, criminate, chide, berate, reprehend, knock, reprove, denounce, deplore, criticize; (adj) judge
crooked: (adj) bent, corrupt, dishonest, curved, unfair, deformed; (adj, n, v) awry; (adj, v) irregular, askew, wry, indirect. ANTONYMS: (adj) straight, honest, principled, even, aboveboard, lawful, level, moral, flat, aligned, honorable
crop: (adj, v) clip, reap, shave; (v) browse, top, graze, cultivate, cut; (n, v) fruit, harvest; (n) craw
cropped: (adj) close
crossing: (n) transit, ford, intersection, hybridization, crossbreeding, passage, voyage, mating, crossway, crosswalk, cruise
crow: (n, v) brag, cry, snigger; (v) exult, triumph, cackle, chuckle, talk big; (n) gasconade, crowing; (adj) raven
crowded: (adj) compact, congested, full, packed, busy, dense, populous, jammed, cramped, tight; (adj, n) thronged. ANTONYMS: (adj) sparse, deserted, uncrowded, loose
crowding: (n) plough crowding, bunch, jostlement, overcrowding
cruel: (adj, v) hard, harsh, sharp, severe; (adj) barbarous, unkind, brutal, bloody, bitter, savage, atrocious. ANTONYMS: (adj) merciful, gentle, sympathetic, humane, liberal, compassionate, charitable, friendly, caring, considerate, libertarian
cruelly: (adv) harshly, ferociously, fiercely, viciously, inhumanly, mercilessly, pitilessly, heartlessly, roughly, unkindly; (adj, adv) bitterly. ANTONYMS: (adv) kindly, mercifully, sympathetically, tamely, peacefully, humanely, compassionately, sensitively, respectfully, innocently, genially
crushed: (adj) beaten, subdued, low, conquered, flattened, dispirited, compressed, overwhelmed, shattered; (v) victimized; (n) crushing. ANTONYMS: (adj) victorious, euphoric
crying: (adj, v) exigent, instant, pressing, urgent; (adj) insistent, clamant, imperative, blatant; (n) weeping; (v) weep; (adj, n) sniveling
culpable: (adj) guilty, blameworthy, censurable, reprehensible, blameable, blameful, condemnable, liable, criminal, to blame, responsible. ANTONYMS: (adj) innocent, inculpable, blameless
culprit: (adj, n) convict; (n) delinquent, accused, malefactor, perpetrator, transgressor, prisoner, sinner, offender; (adj) guilty, felon
cunning: (adj) crafty, canny, adroit, wily, sly, shrewd, tricky, artful; (n) craftiness, craft, cleverness. ANTONYMS: (adj) simple, honest, stupid, unimaginative, gullible, ingenuous, straightforward, candid, sincere; (n) frankness, straightforwardness

cupidity: (n) covetousness, greed, avariciousness, greediness, lust, acquisitiveness, cacoethes, voracity, desire, eagerness; (adj) avidity. ANTONYMS: (n) aversion, dislike, distaste
cure: (n, v) correct, medicine, help; (n) antidote, salve, therapy, treatment; (v) treat, pickle, preserve, restore. ANTONYMS: (n) poison; (v) injure, hurt, harm, wound, damage, exacerbate
cured: (adj) recovered, corned, aged, mellow, whole, better, pickle cured, salted, vulcanised, well, vulcanized
curiosity: (n) curiousness, rarity, interest, curio, oddity, prying, nosiness, peculiarity, novelty, marvel; (adj, n) prodigy. ANTONYMS: (n) emotionlessness, indifference, disinterest
curious: (adj) odd, unusual, abnormal, strange, peculiar, interested, quizzical, quaint, queer, inquiring, inquisitive. ANTONYMS: (adj) incurious, ordinary, apathetic, uninterested, unconcerned, typical, indifferent, everyday, disinterested, conventional, common
curiously: (adv) inquisitively, peculiarly, unusually, strangely, nosily, pryingly, queerly, funnily, weirdly; (adj, adv) singularly, particularly. ANTONYMS: (adv) ordinarily, typically
curls: (n) hair, tresses, ringlets
curly: (adj) crinkly, kinky, curled, crimped, frizzed, permed, curved; (adv) wavily, kinkily, curledly, curlingly. ANTONYMS: (adj) unbent, uncoiled, flat
curse: (n, v) blight, plague; (n) anathema, blasphemy, malediction, denunciation; (adj, v) beshrew; (v) swear, ban, damn, vituperate. ANTONYMS: (n) blessing, benediction, making; (v) communicate
cursed: (adj) damned, doomed, execrable, cussed, wretched, unlucky, accursed, blamed, blasted, confounded; (v) accurst. ANTONYMS: (adj) commendable, honorable, nice, sweet, kine
curses: (n) abuse
curtain: (n, v) cover; (n) barrier, drapery, blind, screen, mantle, mask, shade, pall, shroud; (v) hide
curtsy: (n, v) bob, curtsey; (adj, n, v) courtesy, kowtow; (v) nod, kneel, bow submission, recognize; (n) obeisance; (adj) salaam, kotow
cushion: (n, v) pad, buffer; (v) insulate, soften, protect, bolster, mollify; (n) shock absorber, mat, pincushion; (adj, n) wadding. ANTONYMS: (v) harm, hurt, injure, exacerbate, expose
cushiony: (adj, v) spongy; (adj) cushioned, padded; (v) doughy, foamy, penetrable
cussing: (n) curse, execration, profanity, swear word
custom: (n) habit, convention, usage, practice, consuetude, fashion, method, mores; (n, v) use, accustom; (adj) bespoke. ANTONYMS: (n) fad, innovation, phenomenon, rage, rarity
customs: (n) custom house, impost, customs duty, duty, civilization, mores, duties, manners, morals, toll, tariff
cute: (adj) charming, clever, smart, beautiful, amiable, pretty, cunning, adorable, bright, adroit, intelligent. ANTONYMS: (adj) unattractive, unappealing, homely, detestable, despicable
cutlery: (n) cutter, silverware, bolt cutter, tea set, plates, place setting; (adj) blade, penknife, whittle, razor, edge tool
daddy: (n) Dada, father, begetter, pop, pater, pappa, papa, dadda, old man, poppa, pa
dainty: (adj, v) nice; (adj, n, v) delicacy; (adj) fastidious, savory, tasteful, squeamish, particular, mincing, refined; (adj, n) tidbit; (n) luxury. ANTONYMS: (adj) coarse, vulgar, rough, inelegant, harsh, gross, awkward, accepting, heavy, careless, thick
dairy: (n) farm, dairy farm, milk, laundry, greengrocer, dairy processing plant, delicatessen, fish store, supermarket, confectionery, grocery
dairying: (n) farming, husbandry, agriculture, dairy industry
dairymaid: (n) farmhand, fieldhand, dey
daisy: (n) marguerite, Bellis, aster family, Asteraceae, compositae, family Compositae, freckle, genus Bellis, grave, family Asteraceae; (adj) admirable
dame: (n) lady, female, queen, girl, gentlewoman, wench, skirt, matron, madam, ma'am, woman
damned: (adj) accursed, doomed, blasted, condemned, damn, cussed, wretched, infernal, hateful, goddamned; (adv) damnably. ANTONYM: (adj) saved
damp: (adj) moist, muggy, clammy, cool, dank; (v) check, chill, deaden, break; (n) moisture, dampness. ANTONYMS: (n) dryness; (adj) parched, arid, dried, fresh, hard
dancing: (n) choreography, Terpsichore, saltation, break dancing, ceremonial dance, galloping, hoofing, Pavan; (adj) morrice; (adv) adance; (v) saltant
dandelion: (n) herb, taraxacum, family Compositae, family Asteraceae, daisy, compositae, common dandelion, aster family, Asteraceae
dane: (n) Danish, dansker
dangerously: (adv) hazardously, precariously, unsafely, riskily, seriously, insecurely, harmfully, perilously, severely, fatally; (adj, adv) gravely. ANTONYMS: (adv) safely, securely, carefully, slightly
dangling: (adj) suspended, pendent, pendant, limp, floppy, pendulous; (n) suspension, abeyance, break, abatement; (adv) adangle. ANTONYM: (adj) upright
daresay: (v) assume, deem
daring: (adj, n) bold, courageous, adventurous; (adj) audacious, venturesome, intrepid; (n) bravery, audacity, boldness, courage, adventurousness. ANTONYMS: (n) cowardice, timidity; (adj) timid, cautious, dull, afraid, chicken, fearful, unadventurous, wimpy
darkly: (adv) murkily, dimly, obscurely, duskily, somberly, shadily, mistily, secretly, dismally, heavily, overcastly. ANTONYM: (adv) openly
darned: (adj) blasted, deuced, damn, cursed, goddamned, aeonian, goddamn, irritating, infernal, ageless, annoying
dart: (n, v) dash, run, flit; (v) bound, flash, shoot, rush, race, gallop; (adj, n) arrow, rocket. ANTONYMS: (v) plod, trudge, slog, linger, dawdle, dally, delay, amble; (n) tonic
dash: (adj, n, v) rush; (n, v) touch, sprint, strike, splash, jog; (v) dart, break; (n) tinge, beat; (adj, n) animation. ANTONYMS: (v) dawdle, inspirit, languish, saunter, encourage, linger; (n) stagnation, languor, listlessness, mass, dullness
dated: (adj) archaic, outmoded, obsolete, outdated, old-fashioned, dowdy, behind the times,

antediluvian, ancient, unfashionable, old. ANTONYMS: (adj) contemporary, new, trendy, fresh, fashionable, chic, modern, in

dawning: (n) daybreak, sunrise, start, beginning, aurora, cockcrow, dayspring, morning, birth, first light, break of day. ANTONYM: (n) sunset

daybreak: (adj, n) break of day; (n) sunrise, prime, morning, light, dawning, cockcrow, dayspring, aurora, sunup, daylight. ANTONYMS: (n) sunset, sundown, darkness, eventide, nightfall

daylight: (n) dawn, daybreak, light, morning, sunrise, clearance, sunup, daytime, broad daylight, first light, afternoon. ANTONYMS: (n) night, sunset, dusk, dark, sundown, twilight, darkness, nightfall

daytime: (n) day, afternoon, period, eve, daylight hours, Clarence Shepard day Jr, Clarence day, light, eventide, evening. ANTONYM: (n) night

dazzled: (adj) confused, dazzle, bewildered, blind, blinder, fascinated, unsighted

dazzling: (adj) brilliant, blinding, splendid, glaring, vivid, stunning, dazzlingly, striking, sparkling, fulgent, resplendent. ANTONYMS: (adj) dim, ugly, uninspired, unremarkable, unexceptional, gradual, abysmal, humdrum, dark

deacon: (n) clergyman, Protestant deacon, Catholic deacon, minister, deaconess, church officer; (v) offer sacrifice, deny oneself, fast, doctor, falsify

deafened: (adj) dead, deaf corn, stunned, deadened

dealer: (n) merchant, trader, monger, vendor, seller, marketer, barterer, broker, agent, trafficker, chandler. ANTONYM: (n) buyer

dealings: (n) business, dealing, relations, traffic, proceedings, transaction, affairs, contact, intercourse, trade, communication

debts: (n) amount overdue, amount outstanding. ANTONYM: (n) credit

deceit: (n) guile, artifice, deception, falsehood, ruse, pretense, fraud, trickery; (adj, n) cunning, craft, art. ANTONYMS: (n) sincerity, truthfulness, fairness, frankness, loyalty, straightforwardness, uprightness, truth

deceived: (adj) mistaken, misguided

decent: (adj) adequate, appropriate, becoming, decorous, sufficient, honest, acceptable, modest, seemly, comely; (adj, adv) right. ANTONYMS: (adj) immoral, inappropriate, disreputable, indecent, unsuitable, inadequate, filthy, undressed, unkind, smutty, selfish

decidedly: (adv) clearly, positively, definitely, absolutely, emphatically, decisively, resolutely, firmly, markedly, surely, determinedly. ANTONYMS: (adv) uncertainly, equivocally, slightly, vaguely

deciding: (adj) crucial, critical, conclusive, determining, determinative, determinant, decisive, administrative; (v) decide; (n) resolution, decision making. ANTONYMS: (adj) inconclusive, secondary

decisiveness: (n) conclusiveness, resolve, firmness, resolution, determination, finality, definiteness, resoluteness, rigidity, sense of purpose, strength of will. ANTONYMS: (n) uncertainty, indecisiveness, doubt, inconclusiveness, weakness

declare: (v) advertise, assert, allege, attest, aver, admit, acknowledge, proclaim, avow; (n, v) affirm, say. ANTONYMS: (v) conceal, revoke, suppress, retract, repress, disclaim, withhold, request, refute, block

declined: (adj) less

declining: (adj) deteriorating, decreasing, waning, falling, down, decadent, fading, lessening, diminishing, sloping; (n) decrease. ANTONYMS: (adj) thriving, burgeoning, growing

decorated: (adj) ornate, fancy, frilled, beautiful, bejeweled, ornamental, embellished, decked, bedecked, ornamented, brocaded

deeds: (n) works, activity, actions, conduct, background, events, happenings, performance, activities

deepened: (adj) concentrated, gathered

deepest: (adj) inmost, center, cordial, earnest, genuine, hearty, warm, sincere, innermost. ANTONYM: (adj) outermost

defeated: (n) loser; (adj) frustrated, beaten, broken, overcome, balked, baffled, bested, thwarted, unsuccessful; (adj, n) discomfited. ANTONYM: (adj) victorious

defenceless: (adj) unarmed, vulnerable, helpless, naked, undefended, unguarded, unprotected

defensive: (n) defence, defense, security; (adj) preventive, apologetic, safeguarding, protecting, defending, vindicatory, suspicious, excusatory. ANTONYMS: (adj) offensive, aggressive, receptive

deference: (n) homage, respect, compliance, admiration, allegiance, reverence, obedience, submission, compliancy, duty, complaisance. ANTONYMS: (n) contempt, opposition, rebellion, resistance, disobedience

defiance: (n) challenge, opposition, rebellion, insubordination, rebelliousness, disobedience, resistance, contempt, intractableness, mutiny, contradiction. ANTONYMS: (n) acceptance, surrender, deference, conformance, submission, acquiescence, cooperation, loyalty, meekness, support, agreement

defiantly: (adv) insubordinately, insolently, rebelliously, disobediently, boldly, obstinately, recalcitrantly, brazenly, mutinously, audaciously, stubbornly. ANTONYMS: (adv) passively, submissively, respectfully, loyally, discreetly, amenably, meekly

deficiency: (adj, n) defect, blemish, imperfection; (n) dearth, lack, failing, deficit, shortcoming, inadequacy, absence; (n, v) want. ANTONYMS: (n) excess, perfection, provision, enough, adequacy, supply, strength, virtue, surplus, gain, glut

definite: (adj) certain, clear, distinct, concrete, plain, conclusive, specific, precise, categorical, decisive; (adj, v) absolute. ANTONYMS: (adj) imprecise, unclear, vague, undefined, doubtful, indeterminate, qualified, evasive, indefinite, indescribable, dubious

definiteness: (n) certainty, conclusiveness, accuracy, exactness, finality, decisiveness, definition, predictability, intelligibility, resolution, expressness. ANTONYM: (n) uncertainty

defy: (n, v) dare; (v) brave, resist, ignore, confront, revolt, oppose, withstand, disobey, contradict; (n) defiance. ANTONYMS: (v) obey, acquiesce, surrender, yield, comply, accept

degradation: (n) fall, abasement,

degeneracy, corruption, abjection, debasement, decadence, degeneration, humiliation, deposition, disgrace. ANTONYMS: (n) elevation, glorification, honor

degraded: (adj) debased, low, ignoble, debauched, depraved, abject, sordid, dishonored, corrupted, contemptible, base. ANTONYM: (adj) good

degrading: (adj) shameful, debasing, derogatory, humiliating, dishonorable, ignominious, disgraceful, corrupting, vile, scandalous; (n) infra dignitatem. ANTONYMS: (adj) humane, reputable

deity: (n) God, godhead, godhood, godship, idol, immortal, goddess, Jupiter; (adj, n) divinity, the Deity, theology. ANTONYMS: (n) human, mortal, person

deliberation: (n) cogitation, counsel, debate, caution, thought, advisement, attention, contemplation, consultation; (adj, n) calculation, circumspection. ANTONYMS: (n) thoughtlessness, carelessness, impetuosity, distraction, rashness

delicate: (adj) accurate, tender, dainty, refined, breakable, fragile, beautiful, brittle, soft, nice, frail. ANTONYMS: (adj) inelegant, robust, heavy, sturdy, tough, careless, inaccurate, rough, well, substantial, unscrupulous

delight: (n) joy, pleasure, amusement, rejoicing, gladness; (v) ravish, amuse, please, captivate, transport, enrapture. ANTONYMS: (n) misery, dismay, dissatisfaction, sadness, nuisance, discontent; (v) depress, displease, sadden, irk; (n, v) bore

delighted: (adj) glad, cheerful, blissful, jubilant, happy, overjoyed, joyful, captivated, pleasant; (adj, v) pleased, elated. ANTONYMS: (adj) shocked, unhappy, sorrowful, depressed, melancholy, miserable, desolate, sorry, sad, down

deliver: (v) consign, bear, carry, save, rescue, abandon, send, pronounce, hand over, bring; (adj, v) utter. ANTONYMS: (v) capture, confine, imprison, hold, oppress, enslave, restrain, retain, collect, withhold, shackle

deliverance: (n) salvation, rescue, release, freedom, escape, emancipation, delivery, relief, liberation, liberty, salvage. ANTONYMS: (n) downfall, suppression

delusion: (n) hallucination, deception, cheat, chimera, misunderstanding, mirage, trick, fallacy, error, aberration, falsehood. ANTONYMS: (n) comprehension, fact, truth

delusive: (adj) deceptive, false, misleading, fallacious, untrue, unreal, imaginary, fictitious, delusory, vain, illusory. ANTONYMS: (adj) truthful, real, honest, genuine, actual, authentic

demerit: (n) defect, fault, deficiency, shortcoming, sin, vice, insufficiency, imperfection, drawback, weak point; (n, v) break. ANTONYM: (n) merit

demon: (n) ghost, fiend, incubus, monster, daemon, ogre, daimon, goblin, deuce, genie, elf. ANTONYM: (n) saint

demonstration: (n) parade, presentation, argument, display, manifestation, exhibition, evidence, show, demo, testimony; (n, v) exposition. ANTONYM: (n) concealment

denial: (adv, n) negation; (n) abnegation, repulse, renunciation, no, contradiction, abjuration, rejection, negative, refusal; (v) deny. ANTONYMS: (n) acceptance, declaration, affirmation, confession, admission, agreement, provision, prosecution, approval, permission, affirmative

denying: (v) deny; (adv) denyingly; (adj) opposed, recusative, unselfish, abnegative

depart: (v) go, deviate, decease, diverge, start, stray, wander, leave, die, vary, part. ANTONYMS: (v) stay, arrive, enter, come, abide, conform, continue, remain, appear, converge, return

departed: (adj) dead, bygone, late, former, bypast, defunct, past, left; (adj, v) gone, extinct; (n) decedent. ANTONYMS: (adj) remaining, alive

departing: (adj, v) parting; (adj, n) leaving, going away; (adj) outgoing, outbound, outward, passing, decedent, valedictory, retiring; (v) depart. ANTONYM: (n) arrival

departure: (n, v) decease, demise; (n) exit, leave, deviation, divergence, depart, parting, aberration, passing, takeoff. ANTONYMS: (n) appearance, conformity, greeting, ingress, influx, homecoming, regularity, entrance, birth, coming, advance

dependence: (n) belief, confidence, addiction, dependance, faith, dependency, credence, hope, subordination, trust; (adj) contingency. ANTONYMS: (n) abstinence, distrust

depending: (adv) dependingly; (v) depend; (adj) suspensory, pendent, subject to, pendulous

deprived: (adj) bereft, poor, destitute, depressed, needy, broke, bankrupt, denuded, humble, indigent, insolvent. ANTONYMS: (adj) rich, exalted, salubrious

depths: (n) bottom, abyss, depth, lowest point, low point, depression, bowels, rock bottom, slump, midst, nadir. ANTONYM: (n) peak

deride: (v) mock, gibe, taunt, banter, insult, scoff, make fun of, laugh at, disparage, poke fun at; (n, v) scorn. ANTONYMS: (v) flatter, commend, esteem, compliment, respect, admire, approve

derived: (adj) secondary, calculated, variant, resulting, resultant, plagiaristic, imitative, derivate, deliberate, copied, calculable

descend: (v) settle, condescend, down, drop, deign, subside, go down, dismount, derive, get off, come down. ANTONYMS: (v) ascend, climb, float, scale, increase, level, mount

desert: (adj, n, v) waste; (v) escape, forsake, relinquish, ditch, defect, leave; (adj, v) desolate; (adj, n) worth, merit; (adj) barren. ANTONYMS: (v) stay, support, remain, inhabit, assist, aid, help, keep; (adj) cultivated, productive, fertile

deserted: (adj) desert, solitary, empty, lonely, isolated, forsaken, lonesome, desolate, bleak, vacant; (adj, v) forlorn. ANTONYMS: (adj) occupied, packed, crowded, mobbed, populated, populous, overcrowded

deserved: (v) merited, richly deserved; (adj) appropriate, due, fitting, just, earned, suitable, rightful, adequate, required

desirable: (adj) eligible, suitable, fitting, worthy, expedient, appropriate, alluring, charming, covetable, good, fascinating. ANTONYMS: (adj) repulsive, bad, detrimental, disadvantageous, disgusting, repugnant, repellant, unattractive, unenviable, unwanted,

useless
desired: (adj) coveted, desirable, favorite, wanted, welcome, needed, beloved, required, most wanted; (adj, v) chosen; (v) consenting
desires: (n) requirements, needs
desiring: (adj) envious, insatiable, desirous, eager; (adv) fleshly
desolate: (adj, v) desert, forlorn; (adj) bare, barren, alone, bleak, deserted, cheerless, disconsolate; (v) devastate, destroy. ANTONYMS: (adj) cheerful, inhabited, happy, sheltered, mobbed, overcrowded, ecstatic, hopeful; (v) create, construct, build
desolation: (n) devastation, misery, destruction, depression, grief, wretchedness, bleakness, loneliness, waste, ruin; (adj, n) desertion. ANTONYMS: (n) ecstasy, joy, productiveness, fertileness, fecundity, cheer, fruitfulness, preservation, hopefulness, cheerfulness
despair: (n) disappointment, desolation, dejection, melancholy, gloom, desperation, depression, dismay, discouragement, pessimism, sorrow. ANTONYMS: (n) happiness, hopefulness, expectation, joy, cheer, cheerfulness, resilience, elation, joyfulness
desperate: (adj) despairing, dire, critical, abject, dangerous, in despair, grave, awful, despondent, drastic; (adj, v) forlorn. ANTONYMS: (adj) hopeful, optimistic, rational, promising, minor, cautious, casual, careful, trivial, secure, satisfied
despising: (n) despisal, contempt, despisement; (adj) disdainful
dessert: (n) sweet, afters, pudding, ambrosia, blancmange, compote, confectionery, confection; (v) bait, bever, dejeuner
destiny: (n) fate, chance, fortune, kismet, luck, lot, destination, portion, weird, life; (n, v) doom. ANTONYMS: (n) chance, design
destitute: (adj) impoverished, needy, bankrupt, broke, poor, helpless, impecunious, penniless, necessitous; (adj, v) forlorn, devoid. ANTONYMS: (adj) wealthy, privileged, prosperous, solvent
destroy: (v) demolish, blight, despoil, subvert, dismantle, devour, wreck, devastate; (adj, v) desolate, abolish; (n, v) murder. ANTONYMS: (v) preserve, create, make, construct, protect, repair, restore, uphold, sustain, submit, revive
destruction: (n, v) defeat; (n) death, ruin, collapse, demolition, devastation, downfall, abolition, damage, desolation, end. ANTONYMS: (n) preservation, protection, creation, reparation, formation, conservation, restoration, building, help, making, order
detect: (v) find, discover, discern, notice, observe, spot, see, ascertain, trace, identify, distinguish. ANTONYMS: (v) Miss, ignore, overlook
detecting: (n) spotting, investigation, catching, detective work, sleuthing, police investigation, hearing; (adj) observant
devices: (n) device, tactics, strategy, plans
devil: (n) fiend, demon, ghost, monster, Lucifer, Satan, Beelzebub, deuce, daemon; (v) torment, rag. ANTONYM: (n) angel
devising: (n) cartography, devisal, mapmaking, making; (adj) cartographical, original, cartographic
devoted: (adj, v) addicted, ardent, fond; (adj) affectionate, constant, loyal, pious, faithful, reliable, zealous; (adj, prep) consecrated. ANTONYMS: (adj) disloyal, indifferent, unfaithful, neglectful, uncaring, unenthusiastic, unattached, lukewarm, inconstant, halfhearted, disobedient
devout: (adj) pious, devoted, saintly, heartfelt, holy, dear, devotional, hearty, earnest; (adj, v) pure; (adj, n) godly. ANTONYMS: (adj) irreligious, agnostic, impious, irreverent, unbelieving, undevout, unholy, atheistic, secular, uncommitted
dewy: (adj) wet, dank, bedewed, humid, moist, damp, fresh, new, roric, undried, rorid
dexterity: (n) agility, cleverness, ability, aptitude, skill, deftness, expertise; (adj, n) art, cunning; (n, v) adroitness, address. ANTONYMS: (n) clumsiness, awkwardness, ineptitude, inability, uselessness, inexperience, ineptness, inaccuracy
diabolical: (adj) diabolic, demoniac, demonic, infernal, hellish, unholy, fiendish, wicked, satanic, atrocious, evil
dialogue: (n, v) talk; (n) colloquy, conversation, interview, interlocution, chat, conference, discussion, dialog, talks, communication
diameter: (n) calibre, bore, width, diam, radius, breadth, diameters, thickness, windage, diametral, length
diamond: (n) lozenge, infield, square, rhombus, rectangle, ball field, carbonado, baseball diamond; (adj) brilliant, jewel, bijou
dice: (v) cube, cut, chop, cut up, play dice, bet; (n) die, dice box, bone, dees
diffidence: (n) reserve, modesty, shyness, pudency, coyness, timorousness, doubt, humility, timidity, uncertainty, constraint. ANTONYMS: (n) approachability, arrogance, security, brashness
digging: (n) excavation, excavating, digs, dug, excavate, take, locality, mining, barb, creating by removal, attack reception
dignity: (n) degree, prestige, glory, decorum, face, distinction, honor, majesty, eminence, solemnity; (adj, n) decency. ANTONYMS: (n) lowliness, indecency, impropriety, simplicity, cheerfulness, austerity
dilated: (adj) wide, inflated, ampulliform
diligent: (adj) busy, active, assiduous, painstaking, careful, earnest, studious, attentive, laborious, industrious, zealous. ANTONYMS: (adj) careless, negligent, dilatory, idle, inactive, languid, slack, sluggish, lethargic, weary, indolent
diminished: (adj) abated, weakened, lessened, atrophied, belittled, attenuate, reduced, lower, attenuated, cut, short
dimly: (adv) obscurely, darkly, faintly, dully, duskily, vaguely, shadowily, hazily, gloomily, somberly; (adj, adv) palely. ANTONYMS: (adv) clearly, strongly, distinctly
dimpled: (adj) dimply, hollow
dingy: (adj) dark, black, drab, dull, muddy, impure, dim, seedy, dowdy, unclean, grimy. ANTONYMS: (adj) immaculate, spotless, sparkling, bright, neat, brilliant, interesting, smart
dining: (n) feeding, eating; (v) eat
diplomatic: (adj) careful, suave, discreet, delicate, thoughtful, politic, sensible, prudent; (adj, v) strategic; (v) timeserving; (n) diplomacy. ANTONYMS: (adj) tactless,

undiplomatic, violent, uncivil, rude, impolite, foolish, blunt, artless

directions: (n) advice, instruction, guidance, instructions, briefing, commands, orders, will

disagreeable: (adj) nasty, offensive, uncomfortable, distasteful, cantankerous, cross, ungrateful, abhorrent, horrible, bad, painful. ANTONYMS: (adj) pleasant, friendly, amiable, inoffensive, acceptable, desirable, easygoing, happy, pleasing, sweet, nice

disappearance: (n) vanishing, loss, going, fade, evaporation, disappearing, departure, passing, death, receding, ending. ANTONYMS: (n) recurrence, appearing, arrival, renaissance, revitalization, show, emergence, survival

disappeared: (adj) lost, missing, extinct, vanished, left. ANTONYM: (adj) remaining

disappoint: (v) fail, defeat, balk, baffle, disenchant, betray, circumvent, bilk, mock, foil; (n, v) put out. ANTONYMS: (v) please, satisfy, encourage, fulfill, succeed, comfort, inspire

disappointed: (adj) despondent, disgruntled, regretful, dissatisfied, depressed, sad, unhappy, frustrated, disenchanted, dejected, disappoint. ANTONYMS: (adj) pleased, satisfied, composed, happy, triumphant, fulfilled, cheerful, idealistic

disappointment: (n) anticlimax, failure, letdown, comedown, frustration, shame, disillusionment, annoyance, dismay, setback, misfortune. ANTONYMS: (n) satisfaction, boost, happiness, pleasure, hopefulness, fulfillment, comfort, idealism, climax, bonus, gratification

discarded: (adj) waste, junked, scrap, unwanted, unnecessary, useless, throwaway, surplus, superfluous, unused, obsolete

discern: (v) differentiate, see, comprehend, detect, distinguish, make out, perceive, find, note; (n, v) descry; (adj, v) recognize. ANTONYMS: (v) Miss, neglect, disregard, observe, overlook

discernible: (adj) observable, apparent, visible, appreciable, conspicuous, detectable, evident, noticeable, obvious, audible, palpable. ANTONYMS: (adj) indiscernible, unrecognizable, indistinguishable, obscure, obscured, unnoticeable, invisible, undetectable

discipline: (v) castigate, train, chastise, chasten, educate, correct; (n, v) exercise, practice, drill; (n) chastisement, correction. ANTONYMS: (n) indiscipline, permissiveness, laziness, disorganization, confusion, reward, abandon, negligence, persuasion; (v) commend, praise

disclose: (v) declare, betray, reveal, detect, divulge, discover, convey, announce, air; (n, v) impart; (adj, v) confess. ANTONYMS: (v) secrete, withhold, hide, cover, deny, fold, suppress

disclosed: (adj) exposed, open, unconcealed, out of the closet, naked, manifest, discovered, ascertained, detailed

disclosure: (n) discovery, exposure, declaration, confession, announcement, betrayal, display, divulgence, leak, manifestation, publication. ANTONYMS: (n) denial, hiding

discouraged: (adj) despondent, downhearted, downcast, demoralized, dejected, dispirited, disheartened, frustrated, crestfallen, pessimistic, depressed. ANTONYMS: (adj) uplifted, heartened, cheered, inspired, cheerful, encouraged, hopeful, happy, calm, positive, enthusiastic

discourse: (n, v) address, lecture, sermon, converse, harangue, chat; (n) talk, colloquy, conversation, discussion, homily

discreet: (adj) circumspect, prudent, careful, cautious, chary, discerning, tactful, diplomatic, sensible, politic; (adj, v) wise. ANTONYMS: (adj) elaborate, tactless, careless, indiscreet, reckless, bold, incautious, thoughtless, insensitive, loud, obvious

discursive: (adj, v) excursive, discursory; (adj) diffuse, desultory, dianoetic, indirect, discoursive, digressive; (v) ambulatory, monadic, vagrant

disfiguration: (n) deformity, disfigurement, defiguration

disgrace: (adj, n, v) dishonor; (n, v) discredit, shame, stain, blemish, blot, slur, reproach; (v) degrade, debase; (n) degradation. ANTONYMS: (n, v) respect, esteem, credit; (v) glorify, dignify, praise; (n) merit, grace, pride, rise, worthiness

disgust: (n) antipathy, aversion, abhorrence, abomination, detestation, dislike, repugnance; (n, v) shock, distaste; (v) nauseate, displease. ANTONYMS: (n, v) delight; (n) love, attraction, liking, adoration; (v) attract, allure, charm, entice, please

dishes: (n) food, meal, crockery, dinner service, dishware, menu, plates

dishonest: (adj) crooked, corrupt, crafty, underhand, fraudulent, deceptive, wrong, disloyal, untruthful, unscrupulous, shifty. ANTONYMS: (adj) truthful, principled, sincere, sporting, aboveboard, straightforward, trustworthy, open, moral, fair, legal

dishonour: (v) discredit, disgrace, attaint, shame, degrade, desecrate, violate, rape, outrage; (n) stigma, opprobrium

disinclination: (n) dislike, distaste, indisposition, reluctance, antipathy, opposition, disaffection, disrelish, unwillingness, disfavor; (n, v) disgust. ANTONYMS: (n) inclination, disposition, desire, tendency, keenness, willingness

disinclined: (adj) reluctant, loath, averse, indisposed, loth, backward, not content, opposed, dubious, afraid, not in the vein. ANTONYMS: (adj) tending, willing, leaning, eager, bent, keen, disposed

disinherited: (n) disinheritance; (adj) homeless, unloved

dislike: (n) disapproval, disaffection, antipathy, disdain, disfavor, revulsion; (n, v) hate, disinclination, aversion, distaste; (v) detest. ANTONYMS: (n) liking, fondness, taste, attraction, enjoyment, preference, longing; (v) like, enjoy, approve, adore

dismay: (adj, n, v) appall; (v) depress, dishearten, discourage, horrify; (n) consternation, discouragement; (n, v) daunt, affright; (adj, n) terror, dread. ANTONYMS: (n, v) delight; (v) stimulate, assure, ensure, encourage, elate; (n) spirit, satisfaction, mettle, resolution, assurance

disorder: (n, v) ailment, disarray, disease, jumble, muddle; (n) clutter, disturbance, disarrangement; (v) derange, confuse, perturb. ANTONYMS: (n, v) order; (n)

orderliness, calm, peace, tranquility, health; (v) organize, align, arrange, systematize, neaten

disperse: (v) dispel, spread, circulate, break up, disband, scatter, dissipate, diffuse, dispense, disseminate, break. ANTONYMS: (v) gather, collect, converge, centralize, capture, congregate, garner, concentrate, swarm, crowd, aggravate

displayed: (adj) extendant, expanded, splay

disposed: (adj) prone, apt, ready, subject, prepared, liable, game, inclined, fain, likely, minded. ANTONYMS: (adj) ailing, indisposed, unlikely, disinclined, reluctant, impervious

disposition: (n) attitude, character, disposal, tendency, predisposition, inclination, propensity, bias, arrangement, direction, aptitude

disreputable: (adj, n, v) discreditable; (adj) base, dishonorable, doubtful, sordid, infamous, shameful, dishonourable, dishonest, despicable, notorious. ANTONYMS: (adj) honorable, respected, ethical, noble, decent, respectable, sporting, pleasant, admirable, famous, honest

disrupted: (adj) disrupt

dissatisfaction: (n) displeasure, disappointment, dislike, disaffection, discontent, distaste, disquiet, disapproval, regret, discontentment, discontentedness. ANTONYMS: (n) contentment, approval, gratification, enjoyment, idealism, optimism

dissipate: (adj, v) waste; (v) disperse, squander, disappear, diffuse, consume, scatter, disseminate, break, evaporate, spend. ANTONYMS: (v) save, conserve, appear, collect, hoard, absorb, gather

dissipated: (adj, v) fast; (adj) dissolute, immoral, abandoned, profligate, prodigal, gay, rakish, degenerate, squandered, licentious. ANTONYMS: (adj) upright, moral

distinctly: (adv) clearly, particularly, evidently, expressly, obviously, markedly, definitely, precisely, manifestly, separately, decidedly. ANTONYMS: (adv) inaudibly, faintly, vaguely, silently, imperceptibly, poorly

distinguish: (v) discriminate, perceive, know, describe, make out, discover, descry, behold, identify, recognize, separate. ANTONYMS: (v) mistake, confound, ignore, Miss, unite, demean

distinguishable: (adj, adv) appreciable, perceptible, definite, visible; (adj) distinct, apparent, marked, differentiable, recognizable; (adv) observable, noticeable. ANTONYM: (adj) inseparable

distinguishing: (adj) distinctive, identifying, typical, discriminating, specific, distinct, peculiar; (adv) distinguishingly; (adj, v) discriminative; (v) distinguish; (n) hearing. ANTONYMS: (adj) common, typical

distract: (adj, v) confuse, bewilder; (v) disorder, ail, disturb, deflect, craze, disquiet, molest, annoy, agitate. ANTONYMS: (v) center, explain, concentrate, clarify

distracted: (adj) demented, inattentive, abstracted, crazy, frenzied, distraught, preoccupied, distressed, confused; (adj, v) mad, disconcerted. ANTONYMS: (adj) attentive, alert, assured, calm, mellow

distrain: (n) apprehend, arraign, cite, distress; (v) levy, reclaim, impose, repossess, sequester, seize, impound

distress: (n, v) pain, torment, trouble, concern, torture, upset, worry; (n) anguish, agony; (adj, n) difficulty, grief. ANTONYMS: (n, v) comfort; (v) please, soothe, relieve; (n) peace, encouragement, straightforwardness, solace, relieving, relief, prosperity

distressed: (adj) worried, distraught, anxious, sad, disturbed, downcast, hurt, distracted, wretched, shocked, troubled. ANTONYMS: (adj) composed, content, euphoric, happy, comforted, glad, joyful, collected, unconcerned, unaffected

distrust: (n, v) mistrust, discredit; (n) suspicion, misgiving, disbelief, uncertainty, hesitation; (v) suspect, disbelieve, question; (adj) distrustful. ANTONYMS: (n) confidence, faith, trustingness, certainty, belief, optimism; (v) believe, entrust, depend, confide

disturbed: (adj, v) concerned; (adj) anxious, disquieted, upset, confused, worried, restless, disordered, unsettled, distressed, turbulent. ANTONYMS: (adj) rational, relaxed, calm, sane, unaffected, unbroken, peaceful, stable, carefree, unconcerned, untroubled

disturbing: (adj) disquieting, alarming, disconcerting, worrying, bothersome, worrisome, upsetting, unsettling, troubling, troublesome, distressful. ANTONYMS: (adj) soothing, comforting, pleasing, pleasant

ditch: (n) canal, channel, dike; (v) desert, dump, chuck, abandon, discard, cut, leave; (n, v) moat. ANTONYMS: (v) accept, take, adopt, maintain; (n) ridge

divert: (adj, v) distract; (v) entertain, avert, delight, deflect, deviate, beguile, depart, disport, digress, sidetrack. ANTONYMS: (v) bore, irritate, maintain, set, upset, stay, displease, sadden

divine: (adj) sacred, wonderful, blessed, holy, exquisite; (n) clergyman; (v) guess, conjecture, augur, anticipate; (adj, n) almighty. ANTONYMS: (adj) imperfect, profane, earthly, dreadful, physical, ugly, secular

docile: (adj) dutiful, compliant, meek, submissive, tame, teachable, humble, obedient, acquiescent, conformable; (adj, v) tractable. ANTONYMS: (adj) stubborn, assertive, unruly, willful, defiant, vicious, determined, uncooperative, obstinate, disobedient, intractable

docilely: (adv) obediently, tamely, mildly, submissively, pliantly, compliantly, yieldingly, softly, gentlely, dutifully, willingly

doctoring: (n) doping, corruption

doctrine: (n) creed, philosophy, belief, dogma, credo, conviction, lesson, canon, faith, gospel, school

doer: (n) actor, executor, performer, operator, factor, perpetrator, facient, mover and shaker, high flier, fireball, worker

doings: (n) conduct, behavior, behaviour, deportment, demeanour, proceeding, episode, traffic; (v) act, deed, job

dolly: (n) puppet, plaything, cart, tripod Dolly, bird, bobbin, punch, chick, conveyance, crab Dolly; (adv) puppetly

donkey: (n) ass, idiot, fool, moke, dicky, simpleton, jackass, dizzard, domestic ass, donkeys, hinny

doorway: (n) door, entrance, entry, passage, entryway, way in, access, driveway, gate, gateway, lobby

dormant: (adj) inactive, torpid, inert, smoldering, suspended, inoperative, potential, sluggish, quiescent, latent,

quiet. ANTONYMS: (adj) overt, extinct, dynamic, alive, awake
doubled: (adj) twofold, multiple, doubles, folded, repeated, dual, bivalent, reduplicate
doubted: (adj) distrusted, suspected
doubtful: (adj) dubious, debatable, distrustful, questionable, queer, suspicious, tentative, disputable, diffident, unsettled, unsure. ANTONYMS: (adj) trusting, convinced, reliable, confident, persuaded, provable, sure, hopeful, promising, likely, indubitable
doubting: (adj) doubtful, distrustful, disbelieving, incredulous, doubt, skeptical, suspicious, sceptical, wary, doubts, distrusting. ANTONYM: (adj) credulous
doubtless: (adv) assuredly, undoubtedly, probably, unquestionably, clearly, without doubt, presumably; (adj) sure; (adv, v) questionless; (adj, adv) no doubt, to be sure. ANTONYMS: (adj) improbably, uncertain, unlikely, questionable
doubts: (adj) doubting
downright: (adj, n) absolute; (adj, v) sheer, clear; (adj) dead, blunt, candid, plain; (adv) absolutely, thoroughly, wholly, decidedly. ANTONYMS: (adj) semi, limited, incomplete, questionable, slight; (adv) hardly
downward: (adv) underneath, under, below, downwards, downwardly, beneath, down below; (adj) downcast, sloping, depressed, downright. ANTONYMS: (adv) up; (adj) rising
downy: (adj) flossy, fuzzy, soft, hairy, fleecy, silken, nappy, furry, downlike; (v) flocculent, flaccid. ANTONYMS: (adj) coarse, hard
drab: (adj) dreary, gloomy, dingy, cheerless, somber, boring, dowdy, dark, colorless, dull, depressing. ANTONYMS: (adj) colorful, vivid, brilliant, chic, flashy, interesting, cheerful, distinctive, smart, strong
drag: (v) attract, draw, lug, cart, heave, tow; (n, v) pull, puff; (adv, v) trail; (n) bother; (adj) dragging. ANTONYMS: (n) pleasure; (v) hasten, hurry, shove, speed, rush, propel, fly
dragged: (adj) depressed, dejected, upset, unhappy, spent, dispirited, somber, melancholy, gloomy, joyless, low
dragging: (n) pulled wire, stemming, haulage; (adj) slow, sickly, slack, unfit, sluggish, tardy, tedious; (v) involve. ANTONYMS: (adj) energetic, energizing, exciting, prompt, short
drain: (v) deplete, bleed, leak, consume; (adj, v) waste, exhaust, spill; (n) culvert, dike; (adj) cloaca, dissipate. ANTONYMS: (v) fill, replenish, renew, supply, replace, refresh, increase, conserve, enrich, invigorate; (n) ridge
draining: (n) drainage, emptying, refinement; (adj) wearing, ruinous, tiresome, fatiguing, irksome, tiring, strenuous; (v) consume. ANTONYM: (adj) undemanding
drank: (v) absorb
draught: (n, v) draft, sketch, design, potation, plan; (n) dose, air current, wind, gulp, outline; (v) blueprint
draughts: (n) solitaire, go bang, backgammon, misere chess, chess, dominos, board game
drawer: (n) draftsman, drawers, till, designer, box car, cartoonist, commode, engraver, chest, case, locker
drawers: (n) knickers, pants, tights, shorts, bloomers, briefs, underwear, breeches, underpants, underdrawers, trousers
dread: (n, v) apprehension, fear, panic; (n) anxiety, awe, consternation, alarm, trepidation, dismay, foreboding, terror. ANTONYMS: (adj) pleasing, welcomed, pleasant; (v) welcome, want; (n) reassurance, fearlessness, confidence, security, ease, calm
dreaded: (adj) awful, terrible, cowardly, causing horror, dire, direful, desperate, dreadful, fearful, fearsome; (v) drad
dreadful: (adj) bad, awful, alarming, atrocious, fearful, terrible, abominable, appalling, direful, grisly; (adj, v) dread. ANTONYMS: (adj) wonderful, great, lovely, fantastic, marvelous, admirable, successful, nice, joyous, honorable, fair
dreading: (adj) anxious
dreaming: (n) reverie, ambition, nightmare, conception, castle in the air; (adj) absent-minded, asleep, visionary, vacant, wistful, rapt
dreamy: (adj) faraway, romantic, impractical, somnolent, visionary, sleepy, pensive, moony, idealistic, drowsy; (v) balmy. ANTONYMS: (adj) cynical, vigorous, pragmatic, practical, awake, alert, ordinary, prosaic
dreary: (adj) depressing, drab, dull, cheerless, drear, miserable, gloomy, dark, dismal, stuffy, disconsolate. ANTONYMS: (adj) interesting, cheerful, sunny, brilliant, lively, light, exciting, clear, cheery, pleasant, exotic
dregs: (n) residue, grounds, refuse, sediment, dreg, remains, settlings, feces, trash, waste, dross
drenched: (adj) saturated, soaked, soaking, damp, soppy, wet through, sodden, sopping, wringing wet, soaked to the skin, dripping wet
drenching: (adj, n) soaking; (n) wetting, dipsomaniac, sousing, dip, boozer, alcoholic
dressing: (n) bandage, stuffing, fertilization, binding, bandaging, scolding, fertilizer, manure, compress, preparation, farce
dried: (adj) arid, desiccated, dehydrated, shriveled, shrunken, drained, torrid, parched, withered; (n) drier, dryer
drinking: (n) consumption, ingestion, intake, potation, drunkenness, crapulence, boozing, drinkable, uptake, intemperateness, booze
dropping: (adj) dropped, down, fatigued, plunging, plummeting, dipping; (n) sagging, reducing, sinking, dropping of the launcher stages, dispatching
drops: (n) tear
dropsy: (n) oedema, hydrops, edema, chemosis, tumefaction, puffiness, intumescence, tumor, lump, swelling, circulatory failure
drowned: (adj) prostrate, sunken; (v) drenched, drent
drowsily: (adv) sleepily, lethargically, somnolently, lazily, dozily, indolently, sluggishly, soporifically, slowly, dreamily, languorously. ANTONYM: (adv) vigorously
drunken: (adj) boozy, sottish, intoxicated, tipsy, tight, bibulous, groggy, intemperate, blotto, canned, pissed
dubiety: (n) disbelief, doubtfulness, uncertainty, suspicion, dubiousness, suspense, irresolution, incertitude, misgiving, indecision, question. ANTONYM: (n) certitude
dubious: (adj) uncertain, questionable, debatable, ambiguous, vague, unlikely, unsure, unreliable, incredulous, skeptical, undecided.

ANTONYMS: (adj) trustworthy, certain, definite, unambiguous, sure, clear, positive, settled, unequivocal, significant, decided

dull: (adj) dreary, dense, sluggish, dismal, slack, torpid; (adj, v) blunt, stupid; (v) deaden, dampen; (adj, n) cold. ANTONYMS: (adj) lively, sharp, stimulating, exciting, lustrous, interesting, exhilarating, varied, glossy, glittery, luminous

dulled: (adj) dull, blunted, benumbed, duller, blunt, uninterested, rounded, jaded, grayed, colorless, deadened

dullness: (n) apathy, bluntness, boredom, dreariness, flatness, tedium, obtuseness, torpor, monotony, lethargy; (adj, n) phlegm. ANTONYMS: (n) brightness, intensity, brilliance, excitement, intelligence, shine, asperity, animation, gloss, clarity, variation

duly: (adv) rightfully, correctly, punctually, proper, precisely, well, ex officio, accordingly, fairly, appropriately, properly. ANTONYMS: (adv) improperly, unsuitable, unlawfully

dumb: (adj) mute, speechless, dense, dim, silent, dull, slow, stupid, inarticulate, foolish, obtuse. ANTONYMS: (adj) bright, communicative, intelligent, loquacious, sharp, smart, speaking, brilliant, talkative

duplicity: (n) deception, dishonesty, artifice, craft, deceitfulness, guile, treachery, betrayal, chicanery, fraud, trickery. ANTONYMS: (n) loyalty, sincerity, straightforwardness, allegiance, truthfulness

dutiful: (adj) duteous, good, faithful, docile, devoted, deferential, compliant, loyal, pious, meek, constant. ANTONYMS: (adj) unfaithful, undutiful, disrespectful, irresponsible, negligent, assertive, impious, irreverent, neglectful, thoughtful, uncaring

dutifully: (adv) submissively, obediently, deferentially, compliantly, conscientiously, devotedly, duteously, docilely, loyally, respectfully, meekly. ANTONYMS: (adv) carelessly, irresponsibly, unfaithfully, assertively

dwell: (adj, v) inhabit; (v) reside, bide, live, stay, lodge, delay, occupy, continue, be, settle. ANTONYM: (v) wander

dwelling: (n) domicile, home, residence, house, place, accommodation, address, building, lodge, habitation; (adj, n) dwell

dwelt: (v) dwell, inhabit

dyed: (adj) colored, tinted, coloured, bleached, stained, painted, artificially coloured, biased, artificial, unreal, colorful

dying: (n) death, demise, decease, mortality; (adj) vanishing, moribund, last, final, ultimate, failing, ebbing. ANTONYMS: (adj) thriving, well, opening, aborning, developing, flourishing, growing, reviving, rejuvenating; (n) birth

eager: (adj) avid, ardent, agog, acute, zealous, enthusiastic, keen, ambitious, industrious, studious; (adj, n) earnest. ANTONYMS: (adj) indifferent, unconcerned, apathetic, disinterested, unwilling, unenthusiastic, lukewarm, patient, reluctant, listless, bored

eagerly: (adv) zealously, readily, keenly, fervently, avidly, greedily, enthusiastically, intently, earnestly, impatiently, actively. ANTONYMS: (adv) apathetically, nonchalantly, grudgingly, patiently, halfheartedly, reluctantly, unenthusiastically

earned: (adj) deserved, realized, due

earnestness: (n) seriousness, sincerity, gravity, fervor, devotion, graveness, staidness, honesty; (adj, n) ardor, zeal, intentness. ANTONYMS: (n) slackness, lightness, carelessness, frivolousness, cheerfulness, insincerity, flippancy

earthenware: (v) China, porcelain, pottery, ceramic ware; (adj) ceramic; (n) ceramics, delft, clay, stoneware, faience, majolica

earthly: (adj, n) terrestrial; (adj) carnal, worldly, conceivable, human, geotic, secular, terrene, temporal, telluric, sublunary. ANTONYMS: (adj) spiritual, divine, ethereal, immortal, impossible, improbable, inconceivable, celestial

earthquake: (n) tremor, shock, quake, temblor, cataclysm, upheaval, seaquake, avalanche; (adj) thunderstorm, volcano, seismic

easter: (n) east wind, Christmas, Easter dues, easters, Whitsuntide, paschal, Easter Day, Easter sunday, levanter, Allhallows, Pasch

eatables: (n) food, sustenance, victuals, fare; (v) ingesta

eccentric: (adj, n) odd; (adj) wacky, bizarre, abnormal, crazy, strange, outlandish, anomalous, cranky, erratic; (n) character. ANTONYMS: (adj) normal, ordinary, conventional, usual, concentric, common, sane, dull, orthodox; (n) conformer, traditionalist

ecclesiastical: (adj) spiritual, ecclesiological, churchly, clerical, ministerial, divine, priestly, mental, sacerdotal, civilized, Christian

effaced: (adj) obliterated

effectual: (adj, n) efficient, efficacious, able; (adj) forceful, telling, authoritative, operative, potent, adequate, impressive, powerful. ANTONYMS: (adj) ineffectual, incapable, weak, impotent, ineffective, unproductive, unsuccessful, useless

efficacy: (n) effect, potency, effectiveness, capability, force, efficiency, efficaciousness, utility, vigor, strength, usefulness. ANTONYMS: (n) inefficiency, ineffectiveness, uselessness

eglantine: (n) briar, sweetbrier, rose, sweetbriar, eglatere, catbrier, bullbrier, brierpatch, briar pipe, brier patch

egoism: (n) selfishness, egocentrism, self-love, trait, pride, vanity, egocentricity, egomism, narcissism, introspection, insensitivity. ANTONYMS: (n) selflessness, conformity

egoistic: (adj) selfish, egotistic, vain, smug, self-serving, self-centred, complacent, egoistical, egotistical, narcissistic, insensitive. ANTONYM: (adj) altruism

elated: (adj) joyful, delighted, jubilant, exultant, gleeful, happy, triumphant, overjoyed, proud, ecstatic; (n) buoyant. ANTONYMS: (adj) dejected, disappointed, sad, unhappy, miserable, down, depressed, despairing, blue, sorrowful, desolate

elder: (adj) older, big, adult; (n) dean, doyen, patriarch, ancient, boss, elderberry, superior, presbyter. ANTONYMS: (n) youngster, minor, child, inferior; (adj) youngest, younger, little

eldest: (adj) elder, older, oldest, eigne; (n) offspring, progeny, doyen

elicit: (v) educe, derive, cause, fetch, evoke, extract, arouse, excite, provoke, draw out, discover. ANTONYMS: (v) cover, forgo, hide, halt

elicited: (adj) evoked, elicit
eligible: (adj) acceptable, advisable, fit, due, adequate, desirable, becoming, proper, able, capable, admissible. ANTONYMS: (adj) ineligible, unqualified, disqualified, unsuitable, unfit, unworthy
elude: (adj, v) evade, circumvent; (v) dodge, duck, avoid, skirt, escape, baffle, defy, shirk, bilk. ANTONYMS: (v) face, encounter, meet, acquire
emaciated: (adj) bony, lean, thin, gaunt, skinny, meager, wasted, haggard, slender, slim, lanky. ANTONYMS: (adj) fat, obese, heavy, bloated, beefy, overweight
embarrassing: (adj) cumbersome, sticky, inconvenient, disconcerting, difficult, shameful, humiliating, unpleasant, perplexing, clumsy; (v) embarrass. ANTONYMS: (adj) shameless, convenient, honorable, impressive, reassuring, wonderful
embarrassment: (n) abashment, difficulty, quandary, discomfiture, humiliation, bewilderment, mortification, uneasiness, shame; (n, v) distress; (adj, n) dilemma. ANTONYMS: (n) confidence, honor, pride, shortage
embezzle: (v) appropriate, rob, steal, pilfer, misappropriate, filch, defalcate, thieve, plunder, misuse, lift. ANTONYMS: (v) compensate, reimburse
embolden: (adj, n, v) encourage; (v) hearten, animate, comfort, inspire, enhearten, nerve, strengthen; (n) buoy up, assure; (adj, n) reassure
eminently: (adv) highly, prominently, outstandingly, conspicuously, loftily, illustriously, preeminently, famously, grandly, exaltedly, gloriously. ANTONYMS: (adv) commonly, unexceptionally, unremarkably
emotion: (n) love, feeling, passion, heart, commotion, mood, pathos, excitement, sensibility; (n, v) sensation; (v) impression. ANTONYMS: (n) detachment, coldness, unfeelingness, calmness
emotions: (n) reputation, emotion, feeling, temperament, personality, character, disposition, breast, bosom
emphatic: (adj) decided, categorical, expressive, forceful, pronounced, assertive, loud, important, emphatical, insistent; (adj, v) absolute. ANTONYMS: (adj) insignificant, unassertive, understated, unemphatic, halfhearted
emphatically: (adv) decidedly, definitely, positively, categorically, flatly, distinctly, absolutely, explicitly, forcefully, firmly, expressly
employ: (v) use, apply, exploit, consume, wield, hire, engage, exercise, work, busy, utilize. ANTONYMS: (v) fire, dismiss, can, ignore, misuse, sack, underuse; (n) unemployment
emptied: (adj) empty, void, depleted, emptier, annulled, open, vacuous
encircling: (adj, prep) surrounding; (prep) around; (adj) comprehensive, encompassing, roundabout, circuitous, rotary, circumferential, inclusive; (v) encircle
encounter: (n) collision, conflict, battle, action, confrontation, brush; (n, v) combat, contest, rencounter; (v) confront, face. ANTONYMS: (v) Miss, surrender, evade, avoid, yield; (n) shunning, avoidance, withdrawal
ended: (adj) concluded, finished, over, done, completed, closed, through, terminated, consummate, all over; (adj, v) past
endless: (adj) constant, perpetual, interminable, continuous, ceaseless, eternal, uninterrupted, everlasting, incessant, vast, unrelenting. ANTONYMS: (adj) temporary, restricted, limited, intermittent, ending, finishing, sporadic, mortal, inconstant, few, slight
endurance: (adj, n) sufferance; (n) stamina, tolerance, courage, permanence, continuance, energy, fortitude, tenacity, duration, toughness. ANTONYMS: (n) weakness, inconsistency, impatience, frailty, discontinuation, discontinuance, death
endure: (adj, n, v) continue, support; (n, v) bear, suffer, stand, be; (v) accept, undergo, allow, stay, tolerate. ANTONYMS: (v) perish, die, break, fall, discontinue, crumble, end, enjoy, resign, quit, collapse
energetic: (adj) animated, brisk, busy, driving, dynamic, powerful, strong, effective, agile, emphatic, forcible. ANTONYMS: (adj) sluggish, lazy, weary, languid, inactive, exhausted, indolent, apathetic, dull, indifferent, listless
enfeebled: (adj) infirm, enervated, feeble, decrepit, crippled, old, adynamic; (adj, v) sickly, vacillating; (v) weak, accessible
enforced: (adj) required, obligatory, compulsory, applied, compelled, binding, essential, requisite, necessary, mandatory, legal. ANTONYMS: (adj) optional, unenforced, voluntary
engaged: (adj) occupied, betrothed, employed, affianced, engrossed, reserved, absorbed, working, pledged, involved, committed. ANTONYMS: (adj) free, unengaged, unemployed, uncommitted, unattached, single, detached, idle
engagement: (n, v) combat, battle, action, fight, contest; (n) conflict, commitment, appointment, contract, duty, date. ANTONYM: (n) disengagement
engrossed: (adj) rapt, engaged, intent, occupied, preoccupied, busy, fascinated, obsessed, thoughtful, hooked; (adj, v) immersed. ANTONYMS: (adj) disinterested, bored, distracted, indifferent, unconcerned, uninterested, inattentive, carefree
enjoying: (n) relish, enjoyment; (adj) comfortable, fruitive
enjoyment: (n) delight, appreciation, gratification, comfort, relish, satisfaction, happiness, delectation, gusto, amusement, diversion. ANTONYMS: (n) dislike, abhorrence, antipathy, apathy, aversion, discomfort, displeasure, dissatisfaction, misery, repulsion, sorrow
enlarged: (adj) inflated, magnified, extended, expanded, puffy, increased, augmented, amplified, distended, wide, swollen. ANTONYM: (adj) atrophied
enlargement: (n) magnification, amplification, expansion, increase, dilation, addition, development, distension, distention, growth, extension. ANTONYMS: (n) contraction, decrease, lessening, shrinkage, deterioration, drop, erosion
enlivening: (adj) cheerful, bracing, genial, refreshing, invigorating, thrilling, revitalizing, reviving, stimulating, pleasant, vitalizing
enslaved: (adj) captive, locked up, charmed, incarcerated, in bondage, in prison, bound, subject, beguiled, cringing; (v) subjected
entail: (v) imply, involve, demand,

mean, need, induce, evoke, implicate, require, to bar an entail, draw down

entangled: (adj) complicated, intricate, embroiled, complex, foul, confused, matted, tangled, inextricable, knotty; (v) entangle

entering: (n) entry, entrance, admission, enrollment, penetration, ingress, registration, encroachment, entree; (adj, n) incoming; (v) go in

entertain: (v) amuse, delight, bear, cherish, beguile, admit, accommodate, harbor, hold, distract; (n, v) interest. ANTONYMS: (v) disregard, ignore, banish, forget, tire, displease

entertained: (adj) diverted, pleased

entertaining: (adj) enjoyable, fun, funny, diverting, witty, merry, comical, laughable, convivial, humorous, droll. ANTONYMS: (adj) dull, boring, heavy, slow, tiresome, tiring, unentertaining

entertainment: (n) distraction, diversion, enjoyment, show, pleasure, recreation, fun, reception, pastime; (adj, n) party; (n, v) regalement. ANTONYMS: (n) job, boredom, discomfort

enthusiastic: (adj, n) hearty, cordial, passionate, buoyant; (adj) eager, active, anxious, excited, avid, fiery, devoted. ANTONYMS: (adj) apathetic, indifferent, lukewarm, lethargic, halfhearted, disinterested, unexcited, passive, disheartened, reluctant, weak

entreatingly: (adv) imploringly, suppliantly, pleadingly, importunately

enviable: (adj) invidious, advantageous, envious, happy, pleasing, attractive. ANTONYMS: (adj) unwelcomed, undesirable, undesired, unpleasant

envy: (v) begrudge, want; (n) enviousness, desire, heartburning, resentment, envies, heartburn, jealousy, hatred; (adj) jealous. ANTONYM: (n) generosity

envying: (adj) invidious

epigram: (n) aphorism, joke, witticism, expression, locution, saying, crack, wisecrack, moral, jeu d'esprit, smart saying

epoch: (n) era, date, period, day, season, time, term, cycle, crisis, date of reference, times

erect: (adj) upright, vertical, straightforward; (v) build, raise, rear, construct, assemble, lift, put up, put together. ANTONYMS: (v) dismantle, wreck, topple, level, demolish, destroy; (adj) prostrate, drooping, prone, flaccid, flat

erectness: (n) stance, verticalness, uprightness, verticality

errand: (n) chore, mission, job, task, assignment, embassy, duty, charge, messenger, communication, work

errands: (n) everyday Jobs, farm duties

errant: (adj) devious, vagabond, erring, erroneous, perverse, fallible, mistaken, migrant, fugitive; (adj, n) notorious; (adv) adrift. ANTONYMS: (adj) reliable, right, pure, inerrant, correct, trustworthy, righteous

erring: (adj) devious, sinful, fallible, wrong, amiss, at fault, guilty, perverse, reprehensible; (n) transgression

erudite: (adj) educated, scholarly, academic, knowledgeable, cultured, informed, profound; (adj, v) wise, prudent; (n) scholar, savant. ANTONYMS: (adj) unschooled, uneducated, uncultured, illiterate, unlearned, uninformed, foolish

escaped: (adj) at large, at liberty, loose, on the loose, runaway, easy, wild; (n) freer; (v) escaping

especial: (adj) extraordinary, special, specific, chief, individual, distinct, distinctive, characteristic, appropriate, peculiar, express. ANTONYMS: (adj) general, normal, common, unexceptional, usual

esteem: (n) deference, admiration; (n, v) respect, value, consideration, account; (v) appreciate, deem, adore, admire, count. ANTONYMS: (v) scorn, hate, disdain, insult, despise, abominate, abhor, dislike, reject; (n) disesteem, disapproval

esteemed: (adj) dear, reputable, respected, honorable, noble, honored, prestigious, important, distinguished, August, respect. ANTONYM: (adj) disreputable

estimating: (n) estimation

evade: (v) escape, avoid, parry, dodge, skirt, duck, sidestep, circumvent, hedge, fudge; (adj, v) equivocate. ANTONYMS: (v) face, address, accept, meet, acquire

evasion: (n, v) equivocation, avoidance, subterfuge, prevarication; (n) escape, quibble, dodge, excuse, elusion, casuistry, circumvention. ANTONYMS: (n) facing, confrontation, confronting, meeting

evasively: (adv) shiftily, deceptively, elusively, indirectly, deceitfully, shufflingly, falsely, misleadingly, ambiguously, cautiously, carefully. ANTONYM: (adv) carelessly

evident: (adj) obvious, distinct, discernible, clear, manifest, conspicuous, patent, plain, noticeable, open, certain. ANTONYMS: (adj) unnoticed, obscure, concealed, hidden, inconspicuous, uncertain, unknown, imperceptible, disputable, ambiguous, undetectable

evidently: (adv) clearly, patently, plainly, obviously, manifestly, openly, certainly, overtly, markedly, conspicuously, palpably. ANTONYMS: (adv) doubtfully, imperceptibly, obscurely, questionably, actually, ambiguously, inconspicuously

evil: (adj) bad, criminal, corrupt, wicked, destructive, depraved; (adj, n) ill, detriment; (n) adversity, disaster, depravity. ANTONYMS: (n) goodness, righteousness, morality; (adj) kindhearted, righteous, benign, moral, pure, upright, virtuous, sinless

evils: (n) mala

exacting: (adj) fastidious, austere, strict, trying, stern, difficult, hard, finicky, nice; (adj, v) exigent; (adj, n) exact. ANTONYMS: (adj) lenient, relaxed, tolerant, unexacting, unfastidious, basic, careless, relaxing

exaggerated: (adj) extravagant, theatrical, immoderate, inflated, overdone, hyperbolic, magnified, pretentious, overstated, excessive; (adj, v) hypertrophied. ANTONYMS: (adj) restrained, unembellished, minimized

exalt: (v) glorify, celebrate, animate, raise, advance, promote, elevate, praise; (n, v) dignify, adore, ennoble. ANTONYMS: (v) degrade, ridicule, debase, condemn, criticize, deprecate, desecrate, disparage

exalted: (adj) elevated, eminent, noble, high, August, elated, dignified, great, sublime, grand, big. ANTONYMS: (adj) belittled, condemned, criticized, debased, humble, humiliated, low, lowly, minor, ridiculed, base

exasperating: (adj) annoying, bothersome, maddening, infuriating, trying, irritating,

tedious, vexatious, vexing, galling, exacerbating. ANTONYMS: (adj) pleasing, pleasant, satisfying

exasperatingly: (adv) maddeningly, annoyingly, infuriatingly, irksomely, provokingly, tediously, gallingly, tiresomely, aggravatingly, vexingly, nauseatingly

exasperation: (adj, n) exacerbation; (n) wrath, annoyance, anger, resentment, rage, irritation, ire, indignation, heat, displeasure. ANTONYMS: (n) delight, calmness, satisfaction

excellence: (adj, n) worth, eminence, desert; (n) distinction, advantage, goodness, superiority, virtue, greatness, predominance; (adj) mastery. ANTONYMS: (n) mediocrity, failing, fault, flaw, unevenness, imperfection, disgrace, commonness

excepting: (conj, prep) but, bar; (n, prep) except for, exclusive of; (prep) aside from, besides, apart from, barring, excluding, with the exception of; (v) saving. ANTONYM: (prep) including

exceptional: (adj) abnormal, excellent, particular, prodigious, extraordinary, uncommon, singular, unusual, outstanding, unique, superior. ANTONYMS: (adj) common, ordinary, average, normal, usual, poor, abysmal, inferior, unexceptional, regular, everyday

excess: (n) extravagance, dissipation, plethora, abundance, exaggeration, overindulgence, surfeit, overabundance, overplus; (adj) extra, unnecessary. ANTONYMS: (n) lack, restraint, moderation, shortfall, dearth, temperance, deficit, insufficiency, justice, scarcity, abstinence

excessive: (adj) exaggerated, intense, superfluous, undue, exorbitant, unreasonable, immoderate, enormous, profuse, extravagant, extreme. ANTONYMS: (adj) moderate, affordable, deficient, underdone, insignificant, insufficient, thrifty, skimpy, meager, basic, small

exchanged: (adj) counterchanged, bartered, substituted

excited: (adj, v) animated, ardent; (adj) ablaze, enthusiastic, emotional, frantic, warm, heated, delirious, fervent, passionate. ANTONYMS: (adj) cool, unexcited, bored, tranquil, easygoing, disappointed, despairing, comatose, apathetic, sedate, composed

excitement: (n) commotion, emotion, animation, agitation, disturbance, elation, enthusiasm, eagerness, taking, excitation, tumult. ANTONYMS: (n) dullness, boredom, tediousness, desolation, apathy, bore, dormancy, indifference, somnolence, despondency, lifelessness

exclusive: (adj) sole, particular, individual, special, single, private, peculiar, select, choice, undivided; (n) scoop. ANTONYMS: (adj) common, public, vague, unrestricted, shared, open, inferior, collective, cheap, available, admissive

exclusively: (adv) entirely, alone, specially, completely, individually, selectly, particularly, totally, especially, wholly; (adj, adv) only. ANTONYMS: (adv) openly, partly, partially

exemplary: (adj) model, typical, representative, classic, admonitory, ideal, warning, commendable, worthy, excellent, virtuous. ANTONYMS: (adj) awful, lousy, poor, unconventional, reprehensible, wrong, substandard, blameworthy

exertion: (n) application, exercise, endeavor, attempt, struggle, trouble, diligence, strain, labor, pull, essay. ANTONYMS: (n) idleness, inactivity, inertia, relaxation, laziness, ease

exhibit: (adj, n, v) display; (v) evince, evidence, expose, demonstrate, disclose, flaunt, announce, present, show, produce. ANTONYMS: (v) hide, cover; (n) concealment, hiding

exhibited: (adj) ostensible, avowed, apparent, declared

exhortation: (n) warning, monition, persuasion, suggestion, counsel, incitement, sermon, admonition, exhort, hortation, admonishment

exiguity: (n) insufficiency, scantiness, inadequacy, paucity, poorness, meagreness, scantness, poverty, lack, meagerness; (adj) inextension

exile: (n, v) expatriate; (v) banish, deport, drive out, expel, proscribe; (n) expulsion, deportation, refugee, deportee, outcast. ANTONYMS: (v) restore, welcome, appoint

expectation: (n) expectancy, belief, hope, possibility, outlook, trust, confidence, arithmetic mean, thought, suspense; (n, v) prospect. ANTONYMS: (n) despair, hopelessness, discouragement, distrust

expecting: (adj) pregnant, confident, with child, heavy, hopeful; (n) family way

explicable: (adj) understandable, explainable, interpretable, answerable, justifiable, comprehensible. ANTONYMS: (adj) inexcusable, mysterious, incomprehensible

explicit: (adj) clear, unmistakable, manifest, exact, sharp, lucid, definite, broad, direct, perspicuous, emphatic. ANTONYMS: (adj) unspoken, tacit, understood, implicit, bland, ambiguous, confused, indirect, obscure, unclear, hidden

exploring: (adj) indagative, emissary, excursive

exposition: (n) comment, exhibition, show, explanation, elucidation, clarification, exhibit, description, demonstration, dissertation, fair

expressing: (adj) significant; (n) speech

expressions: (n) vocabulary, terms, language

expressly: (adv) specially, particularly, distinctly, specifically, explicitly, especially, utterly, clearly, precisely, telly, exactly. ANTONYMS: (adv) ambiguously, conditionally, implicitly, indirectly, vaguely

extraordinary: (adj) odd, exceptional, curious, rare, special, phenomenal, amazing, astonishing, unusual, strange, abnormal. ANTONYMS: (adj) ordinary, normal, everyday, usual, common, mundane, regular, undistinguished, unremarkable, insignificant, natural

extravagant: (adj) wasteful, luxurious, prodigal, exaggerated, profligate, costly, expensive, lavish, immoderate, profuse, undue. ANTONYMS: (adj) restrained, frugal, parsimonious, plain, stingy, understated, thrifty, reasonable, moderate, cautious, tasteful

extremity: (n) end, member, boundary, bound, close, appendage, limit, limb, ending, fringe, conclusion. ANTONYMS: (n) trunk, average, minimum, head, leniency

extricated: (adj) free, disengaged, freer, emancipated, freed

exulting: (adj) jubilant, flushed,

triumphant, experiencing triumph, rejoicing, prideful, elated, disdainful, triumphal; (v) exult; (n) joy

facade: (n) appearance, outside, face, front, veneer, pretense, disguise, surface, guise, semblance, frontispiece. ANTONYMS: (n) interior, substance, rear, genuine

facsimile: (n) copy, autotype, reproduction, replica, imitation, print, counterpart, carbon copy; (adj, n) model; (n, v) fax; (v) telefax. ANTONYM: (n) master

faculties: (n) mother wit

faded: (adj) pale, bleached, dull, exhausted, faint, washy, withered, colorless, discoloured, attenuate; (adj, v) dilapidated. ANTONYMS: (adj) vivid, Colored, colorful, fresh, vigorous, strong, bright

fading: (n) attenuation, bleaching, discoloration, disappearance, evaporation, colour fading, decay; (adj) disappearing, paling, weakening, decaying. ANTONYMS: (adj) thriving, increasing, growing

failing: (adj, n) deficiency, blemish, imperfection; (n) fault, shortcoming, failure, weakness, flaw, inadequacy, foible; (adj) declining. ANTONYMS: (adj) thriving, flourishing, well, strong, growing, healthy; (n) strength, virtue, specialty, capability, passing

faint: (adj, n, v) swoon; (adj) dim, feeble, dizzy, indistinct, vague, soft, dull; (adj, v) weak; (v) languish, pass out. ANTONYMS: (adj) distinct, clear, obvious, loud, considerable, pungent, invigorated, hearty, energetic, defined; (v) revive

faithful: (adj, n) accurate, correct, exact, true; (adj) close, unfailing, dependable, devoted, sound, devout; (adj, v) constant. ANTONYMS: (adj) unreliable, false, inaccurate, unfaithful, unrealistic, faithless, perfidious, backstabbing, cheating, inexact, loose

fallacy: (n) delusion, deception, paralogism, illusion, misconception, falsehood, inaccuracy, idol, falsity, sophistry; (adj, n) subterfuge. ANTONYMS: (n) fact, truth, validity, verity, understanding, correctness

fallible: (adj) fallacious, unreliable, human, weak, untrustworthy, erring, errant, imperfect; (v) ticklish, precarious, slippery. ANTONYMS: (adj) infallible, reliable, strong, sure, unerring

falls: (n) cataract, waterfall, chute, angel, torrent, Victoria, twin, force, body of water, Guaira, Niagara

falsely: (adv) incorrectly, fraudulently, deceptively, dishonestly, wrongly, erroneously, misleadingly, deceitfully, unfaithfully, spuriously, fictitiously. ANTONYMS: (adv) honestly, truthfully, faithfully, authentically, correctly, naturally, rightly

falsity: (n) deceit, fabrication, lie, falsification, falseness, deception, fable, disloyalty, dishonesty, unreality, fiction. ANTONYMS: (n) validity, verity

familiarity: (adj, n) acquaintance; (n) intimacy, closeness, experience, casualness, conversancy, knowledge, conversance, naturalness, nearness, friendship. ANTONYMS: (n) unfamiliarity, formality, abnormality, distance, animosity

fancies: (n) stock

fancy: (n, v) desire, fantasy, caprice, dream, wish, daydream; (v) imagine, consider; (adj, v) conceive; (n) conception, conceit. ANTONYMS: (n) reality, certainty, actuality, conviction; (adj) unadorned, common; (v) hate, demonstrate, detest, disapprove, test

farming: (n) cultivation, husbandry, culture, gardening, tillage, land, arboriculture, dairying, animal husbandry; (adj) agrarian, agricultural

far-off: (adj) distant, far, faraway, outlying, extreme, inaccessible, last, long, obscure, unknown, wide

farrier: (n) horseshoer; (v) cowboy, bull whacker, cow puncher

farther: (adj, adv, prep) beyond; (adj) additional, more, distant; (adv) furthermore, besides, abroad, in addition, too; (adj, prep) outside; (pron) another. ANTONYMS: (prep) within; (adv) nearer, closer

farthest: (adj) ultimate, extreme, farthermost, utmost, uttermost, last, furthermost, endmost, greatest, most distant; (adj, adv) remotest. ANTONYMS: (adv) closest, nearest

fascination: (n) charm, glamor, bewitchment, glamour, enchantment, enthrallment, charisma, magnetism, allure, magic, captivation. ANTONYMS: (n) disinterest, boredom, disenchantment, disenthrallment, repulsion

fashioned: (adj) formed, featured, fictitious, intentional, bent, wrought

fasten: (adj, v) attach, fix, affix; (v) connect, bind, tie, tack, pin, stick, clasp, anchor. ANTONYMS: (v) detach, undo, unlock, loosen, release, open, disconnect, untie, separate, unscrew

fastened: (adj) tied, fast, buttoned, closed, tight, secure, pinned, binding, empight, steady, firm. ANTONYMS: (adj) unfastened, unbuttoned

fastening: (n) clasp, clip, buckle, attachment, lock, catch, link, bonding; (n, v) bond; (v) tie, bind

fatal: (adj) deadly, pestilent, lethal, disastrous, destructive, dangerous, deathly, fateful, murderous, critical; (adj, v) mortal. ANTONYMS: (adj) harmless, nourishing, healthful, benign, uncritical, mild

fatherhood: (n) fathership, relationship, kinship, authorship, parenthood, parentage, begetter, family headship, family relationship, father, beginner

fatherly: (adj) fatherlike, loving, motherly, sisterly, parental, affectionate, benevolent, benign; (adj, adv) kind; (adv) patriarchal, indulgent. ANTONYM: (adv) motherly

fatigued: (adj) tired, weary, beat, worn, tired out, jaded, spent, worn out, done in, fagged, run-down. ANTONYMS: (adj) refreshed, alert, lively, energized, energetic

fatiguing: (adj) arduous, tiresome, tedious, hard, laborious, wearisome, wearing, strenuous, exhausting, trying, onerous

faultless: (adj) blameless, correct, immaculate, clean, spotless, innocent, flawless, unblemished, absolute, infallible, consummate. ANTONYMS: (adj) blemished, imperfect, faulty, shameful, soiled, blameworthy

faulty: (adj) erroneous, deficient, defective, false, vicious, bad, broken, wrong, incorrect, inaccurate, damaged. ANTONYMS: (adj) perfect, flawless, sound, adequate, working, certain, logical, fine

favourable: (adj) convenient, encouraging, good, auspicious, useful, benevolent, favorable, profitable, conducive, opportune, prosperous

favourably: (adv) advantageously,

well
favoured: (adj) preferred, preferential
favourite: (n) ducky, darling, pet, deary, dearie, lover, minion, Engle; (adj) popular, favored, preferred
fearful: (adj, n) afraid; (adj, v) dreadful, cowardly; (adj) terrible, apprehensive, awful, timid, anxious, craven, frightful, eerie. ANTONYMS: (adj) rational, calm, confident, bold, unimpressed, charming, fearless, courageous, reassuring, unafraid, wonderful
feast: (n, v) junket, fete; (n) entertainment, dinner, binge, spread, celebration, jamboree, carousal; (v) feed, eat. ANTONYMS: (v) abstain, starve; (n) snack
feasting: (n) carnival, eating
feat: (n) deed, accomplishment, achievement, act, effort, performance, action, triumph, attainment, trick; (adj) fetis . ANTONYM: (n) inaction
feather: (n) pen, feathering, pinion, nib, plumage, quill, kind, spline; (n, v) plume; (adj, n, v) fringe; (v) fledge
featureless: (adj) lackluster, plain, monotonous, indistinctive, uninteresting, colorless, characterless, mediocre, unoriginal, uninspired, unimaginative. ANTONYMS: (adj) imaginative, inspired, interesting, distinctive
feeble: (adj) delicate, decrepit, ailing, helpless, powerless, poor, mild, lax, thin; (adj, v) faint, debilitated. ANTONYMS: (adj) strong, vigorous, hearty, tough, effective, powerful, unrelenting, robust, potent, persuasive, able
feebly: (adv) faintly, unenthusiastically, dimly, hopelessly, unproductively, unpersuasively, unconvincingly, uncertainly, reluctantly, powerlessly, insipidly. ANTONYMS: (adv) robustly, confidently, domineeringly, vehemently, stubbornly, strongly, effectively, convincingly, competently, admirably, wholeheartedly
felicitous: (adj) apt, suitable, appropriate, proper, applicable, fortunate, apposite, clever, cute, lucky; (adj, n) happy. ANTONYMS: (adj) inappropriate, infelicitous, inopportune, unfitting, unhappy
fellows: (n) fellow, membership, faculty
fellowship: (n) community, company, companionship, communion, camaraderie, society, comradeship, association, body; (adj, n) familiarity, acquaintance. ANTONYMS: (n) unsociability, unfriendliness, hostility
felon: (n) convict, culprit, crook, malefactor, thug, desperado, miscreant, offender, hoodlum, outlaw; (adj) felonious
feminine: (adj) effeminate, womanly, maidenly, delicate, not male, pistillate, wifely, mild; (n) girl, lady, gender. ANTONYMS: (adj) male, unwomanly, neuter
fence: (n, v) hedge, wall, bar; (n) barrier, hurdle, pale, boundary; (v) quibble, enclose, parry, contend. ANTONYMS: (v) challenge, face, confront
fenced: (adj) hedged in, provisional, guarded, bounded
fend: (v) repel, resist, dispel, guard, counteract, obstruct, ward off, protect, safeguard, fend off; (n) fen
fertile: (adj) productive, fat, fecund, abundant, fruitful, exuberant, copious, affluent, bountiful, generous; (adj, v) creative. ANTONYMS: (adj) sterile, unproductive, barren, fruitless, arid, impotent, withering
fervent: (adj) ardent, eager, earnest, enthusiastic, intense, cordial, passionate, hot, emotional, torrid, strong. ANTONYMS: (adj) apathetic, unenthusiastic, cool, weak, unexcited, dispirited, dispassionate, flippant, impassive, lukewarm, mild
fervid: (adj) ardent, burning, hot, vehement, eager, passionate, impassioned, fiery, enthusiastic; (adj, v) warm, glowing
fervour: (n) ardour, fervidness, fervency, fervor, ardor, enthusiasm, eagerness, zest, elan, ardency, fire
fetch: (v) carry, bring, bring in, convey, draw, elicit, deliver, catch, get, attract; (adj, n) feint
fetishism: (n) fetish, zoolatry, belief
fetters: (n) chains, captivity, bond, restraint, irons, handcuffs, iron, enduring; (v) confine, fee, embellish. ANTONYM: (n) liberation
fever: (n) malaria, delirium, pyrexia, heat, frenzy, feverishness, febricity, Bilious typhoid fever, Levant fever, Hectic infantile fever, Typhoid fever
feverish: (adj) febrile, feverous, fiery, frenzied, fevered, excited, sick, fanatical; (adj, v) hot, flushed; (adj, n) hysterical. ANTONYMS: (adj) calm, afebrile, collected, composed, mellow
fibre: (n) fiber, character, string, fibril, filament, strand, coir, byssus, bristle, bassine, beard
fiction: (n) falsehood, fable, invention, story, lie, fantasy, romance, falsity, figment, novel, sham. ANTONYMS: (adj) factual; (n) fact
fiddle: (n, v) con, cheat, trick; (v) tamper, play, diddle, meddle, tinker; (n) kit, swindle, fraud
fiddler: (n) Fiddler's money, trumpeter, fifer, instrumentalist, musician, player, piper, violin player, twiddler, tinkerer, drummer
fiddling: (adj) petty, piffling, niggling, picayune, little, footling, piddling, Lilliputian, diminutive, tiny, insignificant. ANTONYM: (n) correction
fierce: (adj) bitter, acute, cruel, ferocious, brutal, grim, nasty, intense, ardent; (adj, v) savage, furious. ANTONYMS: (adj) gentle, mild, calm, quiet, tame, docile, weak, peaceful, pleasant
fiercely: (adv) violently, bitterly, strongly, savagely, brutally, intensely, wildly, cruelly, vehemently, grimly, furiously. ANTONYMS: (adv) mildly, dully, tame, docilely, tamely, calmly, feebly
fierceness: (n) ferocity, violence, cruelty, force, brutality, rage, intensity, strength, vehemence, wildness, ferociousness. ANTONYMS: (n) friendliness, calmness, meekness
fiery: (adj, n) burning, passionate, glowing; (adj) fervent, ablaze, hot, fervid, impassioned, peppery; (adj, v) fierce, violent. ANTONYMS: (adj) calm, passionless, dispassionate, indifferent, placid, gentle, cool; (adv) easygoing
figuring: (n) calculation, reckoning, estimation, computing, figure, approximation, conversion, derivative, differential, estimate, derived function
filial: (adj) dutiful
fineness: (n) refinement, elegance, daintiness, thinness, choiceness, beauty, superiority, subtlety, slimness, slenderness, narrowness. ANTONYMS: (n) stoutness, thickness, vulgarity, inaccuracy, coarseness, width

finer: (adj) superior, advanced, bigger, higher, more, greater
fireside: (n) fireplace, home, family, habitation, dwelling, abode, domicile, country, dwelling house, fire, habitat
firmness: (adj, n) constancy; (n) determination, resolution, assurance, consistency, obstinacy, steadfastness, resolve, confidence, courage, backbone. ANTONYMS: (n) softness, instability, vacillation, unsteadiness, yielding, irresoluteness, droopiness, indefiniteness, indecisiveness, indecision, leniency
fist: (n, v) hand; (n) duke, clenched fist, feist, manus, grip, index; (v) finger, paw, neif, neaf
fitfully: (adv) intermittently, spasmodically, inconstantly, sporadically, unsteadily, unevenly, uncertainly, randomly, interruptedly, flickeringly, occasionally. ANTONYMS: (adv) recurrently, peacefully
fitness: (n) adequacy, propriety, aptness, appropriateness, capability, physical fitness, correspondence, health, fittingness, correctness, convenience. ANTONYMS: (n) unsuitability, inability, unfitness, illness
fits: (v) epilepsy, bustle, racket, fuss, hubbub, megrims, rout, subsultus, staggers
fitted: (adj) capable, efficient, competent, able, finished, qualified, trained, primed, outfitted, initiated; (adj, v) convenient
fitter: (n) adjuster, machinist, sartor, cutter, mounter, erector; (adj) suitable, healthier
fixing: (n) fixation, fix, adjustment, repair, mending, altering, emasculation, castration, furniture, fastener, fitting
flail: (n, v) maul, flutter, wave; (v) thrash, flap, thresh, buffet, hit, beat up, hurt; (n) hammer
flame: (adj, n) fire, sweetheart; (adj, v) burn, glow; (n, v) flash; (n) ardour, burning, fervor, enthusiasm, combustion, sheen
flank: (n) side, aspect, wing, abdomen, facet, subfigure, formation; (v) border, skirt; (adj) cover, ward
flapping: (adj) loose, detached, baggy, streaming, flying, slack; (n) fluttering, flutter, flaps, dither, disturbance
flash: (n, v) flicker, blaze, shimmer, glitter, gleam, glimmer, blink, flame; (adj, n, v) twinkle; (n) instant; (v) coruscate. ANTONYMS: (adj) tasteful; (n) age; (v) dawdle
flatter: (v) fawn, adulate, wheedle, cajole, soap, kowtow, blandish, grovel, butter up; (n, v) court; (n) caress. ANTONYMS: (v) insult, disparage, criticize, discourage
flavour: (n) aroma, savor, smell, palate, essence, sapor, feeling, feel, sapidity, relish; (n, v) flavor
flax: (n) hemp, lint, line, feature, clothesline, flex, figure, boundary; (v) hit, trounce, flog
flaxen: (adj) flaxy, fair, blond, light, pale, golden, arenaceous, sandy, farinaceous; (n) blonde
fleet: (adj) fast, expeditious, quick, agile, brisk, rapid, speedy; (n) armada, float, navy; (v) flit
flesh: (adj) carnality, concupiscence; (n) mortality, beef, form, figure, frame, person, mankind, humanity, meat
flexibly: (adv) plasticly, elastically, elasticly, lithely, acrobatically, athletically, gymnastically, supplely, openly. ANTONYMS: (adv) inflexibly, stubbornly
flint: (adj) stone, pebble, fossil, granite, marble; (n) quartz, silica, flint river, gunflint, crystal, crag
flitting: (adj) fleeting, fugitive, momentary, transient, ephemeral; (v) migration
flog: (v) lash, whip, chastise, lick, trounce, flagellate, birch, castigate, cane, strap, wallop
floors: (adj) floored
florid: (adj) flamboyant, fancy, flowery, aureate, flashy, fresh, figurative, gorgeous; (adj, v) ornate, gaudy; (adj, n) ruddy. ANTONYMS: (adj) pale, plain
flourish: (n, v) display; (v) thrive, prosper, boast, wave, brag, wield, boom, grow; (adj, v) bloom; (adv, v) shake. ANTONYMS: (v) decline, struggle, deteriorate, wilt, pine, fade, flounder, decrease, dwindle
flower: (n, v) blossom, blow; (v) effloresce, flourish; (adj, n) prime; (n) efflorescence, elite, cream, bouquet, floret, florescence. ANTONYMS: (n) residue; (v) wither
fluctuation: (n) vicissitude, wavering, deviation, wobble, swing, undulation, variance, oscillation, hesitation, vibration, modification. ANTONYM: (n) resolution
flush: (adj, n, v) blush, glow; (adj) flat, affluent, rich; (adj, v) even, smooth, level; (n) bloom; (n, v) color; (v) redden. ANTONYMS: (n) pallor; (v) blanch, blench; (adj) empty, low, poor
flushed: (adj, n) red, sanguine; (adj) feverish, glowing, aroused, aflame, burning, exultant, exulting; (n) flush, elated. ANTONYM: (adj) cool
flutter: (adj, n, v) bustle, flurry; (n, v) beat, palpitate, flap, wave, waver, quiver; (v) flit, flitter; (n) excitement
fluttering: (adj) flying, palpitating, flittering, flaring, aflare, waving; (n) flutter, flapping, flicker, flitting; (adv) flutteringly
foggy: (adj) hazy, misty, brumous, murky, blurred, bleary, fuzzy, opaque, thick, indefinite, nebulous. ANTONYMS: (adj) precise, sunny
folded: (adj) plaited, pleated, doubled, artful, braided, corrugated, doubled over, fluted
folding: (n) foldaway, plication, foldable, bend, crease, bending, flexure, pleating, collapsable, collapsible, doubling
folds: (n) laps
folk: (n) family, common people, nationality, nation, country, clan, tribe, race, persons, man; (adj) popular
folks: (n) people, folk, tribe, relations, household, house, relatives, relative, kindred, lineage, kin
folly: (n) fatuity, foolishness, silliness, tomfoolery, nonsense, stupidity, craziness, density, freak; (adj, n) irrationality, trifling. ANTONYM: (n) sense
fond: (adj) affectionate, caring, devoted, tender, loving, amorous, delicate, adoring, doting, ardent, attached. ANTONYMS: (adj) aversion, cold, rough
fondly: (adv) lovingly, tenderly, warmly, kindly, caringly, adoringly, devotedly, amorously, dearly, dotingly, foolishly. ANTONYMS: (adv) coldly, ill
fondness: (n) affection, attachment, love, taste, regard, appetite, tenderness, partiality, endearment, liking, relish. ANTONYMS: (n) aversion, indifference, neglect, antipathy, detachment, hatred
fool: (n) blockhead, dunce, clown, idiot, ass, booby, buffoon; (v) deceive, bamboozle; (n, v) joke, gull. ANTONYM: (n) savant
foolish: (adj) childish, fool, crazy,

dumb, daft, fatuous, stupid, unwise, preposterous, dopey; (adj, n) silly. ANTONYMS: (adj) wise, sensible, shrewd, prudent, visionary, diplomatic, levelheaded, sane, rational, mature, judicious

footing: (n) foothold, base, bottom, foundation, status, rank, foot, pedestal, situation, relation, root. ANTONYM: (n) top

footsteps: (n) road, footprints, way, trail, path, track, footpath

forbade: (v) prohibit, to prohibit

forbearance: (n) patience, clemency, pardon, abstention, abstinence, mercy, longanimity, avoidance, postponement, indulgence, restraint. ANTONYMS: (n) impatience, intolerance

forbid: (v) prohibit, ban, disallow, bar, obstruct, exclude, deny, avert, frustrate, to prohibit, enjoin. ANTONYMS: (v) allow, let, approve, authorize, stand

forbidden: (adj) banned, taboo, illegal, prohibited, contraband, illicit, verboten, proscribed, outlawed, illegitimate; (adj, adv) off-limits. ANTONYMS: (adj) allowed, permitted, permissible, legal, open

forcible: (adj) forceful, active, energetic, powerful, strong, violent, coercive, vigorous, effective, convincing; (prep) conclusive. ANTONYMS: (adj) weak, gentle, peaceful

fording: (n) crossing, deep fording, Edsel Bryant ford, ford Madox ford

forefathers: (n) patriarchs, forefather, ancestor, colony, lineage, family

forefinger: (n) index finger, index, forefingers, paw, thumb, hand, exponent, antenna, feeler

forehead: (n) brow, front, foreland, lineament, mut, phiz, physiognomy, visage, eyebrow, skull; (adv) foremost

foreignness: (n) alienage, alienism, curiousness, quality, foreign, exoticness, peregrinity, strangeness, exotism, extraneity

foreman: (n) boss, master, overseer, gaffer, supervisor, ganger, craftsman, straw boss, foreperson, leader, foremen. ANTONYM: (n) worker

foremost: (adj, adv, v) first; (adj, n) chief, capital, leading, cardinal, principal, main; (adj) best, front, central, top. ANTONYMS: (adj) last, insignificant, inferior, worst, secondary

foreseeing: (n) foresight, anticipation, prospicience, prevision, forecast; (v) foresee; (adj) prevoyant, conscious beforehand

forgetfulness: (n) neglect, amnesia, obliviousness, inattention, memory loss, omission, unknowingness, unawareness, Lethe, carelessness, loss of memory. ANTONYMS: (n) awareness, concentration, remembering, attention

forgetting: (v) forget; (adj) oblivious; (n) disregard

forgive: (v) absolve, excuse, acquit, remit, pardon, justify, to forgive, exonerate, overlook, clear, to excuse. ANTONYMS: (v) condemn, punish, castigate

fork: (n) crotch, bifurcation, turn, branching; (n, v) branch, bend; (v) diverge, split, branch off, separate, divide. ANTONYM: (v) converge

forlorn: (adj) hopeless, desolate, despairing, unhappy, miserable, deserted, disconsolate, downcast, cheerless, wretched, abject. ANTONYMS: (adj) happy, hopeful, fine

forlornness: (n) unhappiness, devastation, sadness, loneliness, despair, bleakness, aloneness

formalities: (n) ceremony, etiquette, observance, process, procedure, protocol, manners, official procedure, rules and regulations, code of conduct, ceremonial

formality: (n) ceremony, formalities, decorum, etiquette, custom, ceremoniousness, starch, ritual, rite, observance; (n, v) stiffness. ANTONYMS: (n) casualness, possibility, warmth, friendliness

formally: (adv) ceremoniously, officially, stiffly, solemnly, regularly, ceremonially, distantly, primly, precisely, stately, conventionally. ANTONYMS: (adv) casually, warmly

formerly: (adv) already, previously, earlier, lately, originally, anciently, aforetime, first, erstwhile, at one time, once. ANTONYMS: (adv) afterward, lastly, later, now

formidable: (adj) grim, appalling, awful, difficult, forbidding, heavy, dreadful, fearful, uphill, trying, tough. ANTONYMS: (adj) insignificant, easy, comforting, feeble, cheerful

forrard: (adv) fore, forrader, forward, forwards, frontward, frontwards, ahead

forsake: (v) abandon, ditch, relinquish, abdicate, fail, leave, forgo, chuck, disclaim; (n, v) drop; (adj, v) quit. ANTONYM: (v) support

forsaken: (adj) deserted, abandoned, lonely, forlorn, derelict, desert, empty, solitary, friendless; (adj, v) jilted; (v) crossed in love. ANTONYM: (adj) unforsaken

forth: (adv) away, along, onward, ahead, before, on, off, on the high road, on the road, on the way, under way

forthcoming: (adj) coming, approaching, upcoming, outgoing, imminent, pending, oncoming, extroverted, gracious; (v) batching, brewing. ANTONYMS: (adj) past, current, unavailable, reticent, restrained, distant, quiet

forthwith: (adv) directly, immediately, at once, now, instantly, straight, presently, straightaway, incontinently; (adj, adv) quickly; (adj) immediate

fortune: (n) estate, fate, fluke, destiny, luck, accident, means, assets, riches, abundance, doom. ANTONYM: (n) design

forward-looking: (adj) forward, hopeful, positive

fostering: (n) breeding, rearing, nurturing, nurture, fosterage, encouragement, bringing up, promotion, development, elevation, education

foul: (adj, v) nasty, base, corrupt, coarse; (adj) filthy, disgusting, evil, unclean, putrid; (n, v) defile, soil. ANTONYMS: (adj, v) clean, pure; (adj) pleasant, fair, inoffensive, humane, attractive, honest, pleasing, fragrant; (v) unclog

founded: (prep) established, institute; (v) fusil, cast

fountain: (n, v) fount, well; (n) jet, font, source, reservoir, origin, derivation, repository, root, squirt

fowler: (n) huntsman, birdcatcher, Henry Watson fowler

foxes: (n) dogs, Canidae, family Canidae, Vulpes, genus Vulpes

foxglove: (n) digitalis, fingerroot, herb, fairy bell, fingerflower, digitalis glycoside, common foxglove, digitalin

fragments: (n) chips, rubble, wreckage, atoms, finders, dust, flinders, remains, Smither, smithereens, trash

fragrant: (adj) spicy, odorous, balmy,

sweet, odorant, scented, redolent, savory, fragrance, odoriferous, scent. ANTONYMS: (adj) smelly, putrid, malodorous, odorless

frankness: (n) honesty, truth, forthrightness, candidness, freedom, sincerity, candour, plainness, bluffness, outspokenness, ingenuousness. ANTONYMS: (n) cunning, tact, delicacy, deceit, conformity, reticence, indirectness, evasiveness

freaks: (n) caprices, facetiousness, humor

freely: (adv) loosely, frankly, openly, generously, independently, gratuitously, voluntarily, liberally, free, sparely; (adj, adv) spontaneously. ANTONYMS: (adv) reluctantly, deceitfully, accurately, meagerly, parsimoniously, secretly, stingily, unwillingly; (adj) restricted

freer: (adj) unconfined

freezing: (adj, v) icy, frosty, glacial; (adj) chilly, arctic, frigid, bitter, chill; (n) freeze, congelation, refrigeration. ANTONYMS: (adj) boiling, sweltering, warm, mild, tropical, torrid, balmy

frequent: (adj, v) customary, usual, ordinary, incessant; (adj) everyday, many, familiar, continual, habitual; (v) patronize, haunt. ANTONYMS: (adj) infrequent, occasional, intermittent, spasmodic, unusual, few; (v) shun, boycott, avoid

freshness: (adj) coolness; (n) impertinence, gall, greenness, impudence, insolence, newness, viridity, originality, crust, crispness. ANTONYMS: (n) oldness, clutter, humidity, mustiness

fretted: (adj) latticed, haggard, magged, latticelike, reticulated, reticular, interlaced. ANTONYM: (adj) unfretted

fretting: (adj) irritable, dissatisfied, peevish; (n) festering, friction, exulceration

friendship: (n) association, familiarity, affection, companionship, friendliness, intimacy, company, attachment, relationship; (n, v) amity, concord. ANTONYMS: (n) hostility, animosity, antagonism, conflict, formality, rivalry, hatred, detachment, distance, isolation

frighten: (v) cow, alarm, daunt, terrify, appall, scare, affright, intimidate, terrorize, appal; (n, v) fright. ANTONYMS: (v) comfort, reassure, soothe, calm

frightened: (adj) fearful, timid, startled, terrified, scared, alarmed, anxious, apprehensive, horrified, intimidated, restless. ANTONYMS: (adj) unimpressed, confident, brave, fearless, reassured

frightening: (adj) awesome, awful, menacing, alarming, fearsome, horrific, terrible, creepy, fearful, dread, formidable. ANTONYMS: (adj) comfortable, soothing, pleasant, comforting, approachable, normal, hospitable

frill: (n) flounce, adornment, embellishment, frills, luxury, furbelow, fringe, trimming, frame; (n, v) ruffle, disturbance

fringe: (n) brim, brink, boundary, periphery, rim, lip, bound; (n, v) edge, hem, skirt; (adj, n, v) feather. ANTONYMS: (adj, n) mainstream; (n) center

frisking: (n) search, hunt, hunting, searching

frost: (n, v) freeze, chill; (n) cold, hoarfrost, icing, hoar, Robert lee frost, failure; (adj, n) rime; (v) ice; (adj) frozen. ANTONYMS: (n) hot, heat, warmth

frosty: (adj, v) icy, glacial; (adj) frigid, freezing, wintry, arctic, chill, frozen, chilly, bleak, cool. ANTONYMS: (adj) friendly, pleasant, hot, torrid, tropical, balmy, approachable

frown: (adj, v) lower; (adj, n) scowl; (n, v) pout, grimace, glower, glare; (adj) black looks, gloam, glout; (v) sulk, gnash. ANTONYM: (v) approve

frowning: (adj) dismal, dark, gloomy, lowering, scowling, frowny, clouded; (adv) frowningly; (n) austere, boisterous, coarse

frustrated: (adj) discouraged, defeated, foiled, baffled, thwarted, dissatisfied, discomfited, balked, stymied, disgruntled; (v) unhinged. ANTONYMS: (adj) encouraged, heartened, successful, calm, pleased

frustration: (n, v) defeat; (n) disappointment, letdown, vexation, setback, check, disillusionment, anger, irritation, annoyance, dissatisfaction. ANTONYMS: (n) encouragement, pleasure, calmness, success

fulfil: (v) complete, finish, accomplish, do, appease, carry out, execute, carry through, satisfy, perform, fill

fulfilled: (adj) complete, finished, done, satisfied, accomplished, completed, whole, delighted, concluded, happy, full of pride. ANTONYMS: (adj) incomplete, unfulfilled, frustrated, ashamed, dissatisfied

fulfilling: (adj) satisfying, satisfactory, pleasing, uplifting, pleasurable, effectual; (n) execution, enforcement. ANTONYM: (adj) frustrating

fulfilment: (n) achievement, accomplishment, fulfillment, completion, fruition, discharge, consummation, effectuation, satisfaction, pursuance, prosecution

fuller: (adj) rotund; (n) roller; (v) tucker

funereal: (adj) doleful, dismal, dreary, somber, gloomy, melancholy, dolorous, dark, depressing, lugubrious; (v) burial. ANTONYMS: (adj) cheery, lively, cheerful

furnish: (v) afford, provide, contribute, render, offer, accommodate, supply, outfit, yield, decorate; (n, v) give. ANTONYM: (v) divest

furnished: (adj) fitted, arranged, privileged, instruct, carrying weapons, equipt, enlightened; (v) provide, furnish, begone, beset

furze: (n) gorse, Irish gorse, Ulex europaeus, Needle furze, shrub, bush, bramble, dyeweed

fuss: (n, v) flurry, bicker, fidget, hubbub; (adj, n) stir; (n) flap, commotion, ado, bother, disturbance; (v) fret. ANTONYM: (n) peace

fustian: (adj, n) rant, jargon; (adj) bombastic, inflated, pompous, grandiloquent, highfalutin, prose run mad; (n) claptrap, blah, grandiosity

futile: (adj) useless, empty, ineffective, frivolous, idle, abortive, bootless, hopeless, meaningless, vain, hollow. ANTONYMS: (adj) successful, useful, fruitful, meaningful, worthwhile, promising, productive, effective

futility: (n) emptiness, inanity, worthlessness, vanity, uselessness, fruitlessness, frivolity, unusefulness, purposelessness, hollowness, insignificance. ANTONYMS: (n) importance, worth, worthiness, fruitfulness, effectiveness, competence, usefulness

galled: (adj) chafed, uncomfortable,

chilly, bleak, bare, bald, angry, painful
galling: (adj, v) irritating; (v) aggravating, provoking; (adj) exasperating, bitter, vexatious, vexing, maddening, infuriating, bothersome, harassing. ANTONYM: (adj) pleasing
gardening: (n) cultivation, horticulture, agronomy, floriculture, agriculture, husbandry, spade husbandry, vintage, landscape gardening, flower gardening, landscaping
garment: (n, v) garb, apparel; (n) habiliment, habit, gown, vest, things, guise; (v) clothe, tog, raiment
garments: (n) attire, clothing, dress, apparel, raiment, outfit, costume, garb, array, gear, anything worthless
gaspingly: (adv) breathlessly, windedly, puffingly, pursily
gather: (n, v) fold, tuck; (v) convene, garner, congregate, compile, assemble, accumulate, collect, meet, flock. ANTONYMS: (v) disperse, scatter, spread, distribute, disband, decrease, part, smooth
gathered: (adj) deepened, congregated, accumulated, amassed, assembled, concentrated, equanimous, congregate, collective
gathering: (n) collection, accumulation, concourse, congregation, assemblage, crowd, compilation, meeting, crew, gather, throng. ANTONYMS: (n) dismantling, scattering
gaze: (n, v) stare, regard, look, behold; (v) gape, see, contemplate, face, pry, view, glance. ANTONYMS: (v) glance, peek
gazing: (adj) fixed
geese: (n) ducks, goose, game birds, order Anseriformes, wildfowl, birds, Anatidae, Anseriformes, family Anatidae
generations: (n) generation, family
gentlemen: (n) sirs, messieurs
gentry: (n) aristocracy, gentility, gentlefolk, nobility, elite, peerage, squirearchy, second estate, society, upper class
ghost: (n, v) apparition, specter; (n) shade, spirit, demon, soul, spook, spectre, goblin, appearance, monster
ghostly: (adj) uncanny, eerie, weird, spiritual, spectral, ghostlike, supernatural, macabre, phantasmal; (adj, adv) ghastly; (adv) spectrally. ANTONYMS: (adj) tangible, natural
gift: (adj, n, v) endowment, faculty, ability, talent; (n) donation, flair, bestowal; (n, v) award, present, boon; (adj, n) capacity. ANTONYMS: (n) penalty, forfeiture, failing
gifts: (n) money, generosity, contributions, charity, caliber, aid, munificence, bounty. ANTONYM: (n) meanness
gilbert: (n) William Schwenk Gilbert, William Gilbert, Gb, GI, poet, librettist, gigabyte, sir William Gilbert, Cass Gilbert, Humphrey Gilbert, g
girlish: (adj) boyish, childish, kittenish, juvenile, adolescent, innocent, schoolgirlish, babyish, immature, youthful, female
gladness: (n) joy, gaiety, pleasure, delight, bliss, glee, happiness, exhilaration, joyfulness, mirth, cheerfulness. ANTONYMS: (n) unhappiness, dismay, displeasure
glance: (n, v) look, peek, flash, peep; (n) gaze, glimpse, coup d'oeil, gander; (v) bounce, glint, ricochet. ANTONYMS: (n, v) study; (n) examination, perusal; (v) stick, stare
glancing: (adj) passing
glare: (n) glance, brilliance, radiance, brightness; (n, v) glower, flash, shine, scowl, beam, frown; (v) flame. ANTONYMS: (n) dullness, dimness
gleam: (n, v) glance, beam, blaze, shine, glimmer, glow, flash, flicker, sparkle, glitter; (v) twinkle
gleaming: (adj) brilliant, shiny, radiant, glossy, lustrous, glowing, beaming, resplendent; (n) gleam, glimmer; (adj, adv) agleam. ANTONYMS: (adj) dull, dirty, rough
glimmer: (adj, n, v) flicker, twinkle; (n, v) gleam, shimmer, flash, sparkle, beam, glow, shine; (v) blink; (n) gleaming
gloom: (n) desolation, dark, darkness, blackness, depression, dimness, dusk, dreariness, despair, dejection; (n, v) cloud. ANTONYMS: (n) brightness, happiness, cheerfulness, glee, ecstasy, joy, optimism, cheer
gloomy: (adj) black, desolate, dejected, cheerless, depressing, dismal, downcast, disconsolate, melancholy, funereal, downhearted. ANTONYMS: (adj) encouraging, cheery, cheerful, bright, hopeful, light, promising, uplifting, joyful, sunny, clear
glorious: (adj) distinguished, beautiful, bright, celebrated, brilliant, eminent, magnificent, super, great, splendid; (adj, v) illustrious. ANTONYMS: (adj) sorrowful, despicable, horrible, shameful, lowly
glory: (n) celebrity, brightness, honor, distinction, glorification, eclat, dignity; (n, v) halo, pride; (v) exult, boast. ANTONYMS: (v) blasphemy, lament, profanity; (n) dishonor, disrepute, ugliness, blame, criticism
glow: (n, v) flush, gleam, shine, glimmer, glare, color, sparkle, beam; (v) burn, flare, kindle. ANTONYMS: (n) wanness, darkness, paleness; (v) pale, struggle
glowing: (adj, n) enthusiastic, cordial, passionate; (adj) burning, fervent, blazing, flaming, fiery, dazzling; (adj, v) warm; (adj, adv) aglow. ANTONYMS: (adj) pale, wan, unhappy, unenthusiastic, derogatory, dispassionate, unwell
glue: (n) adhesive, gum; (v) adhere, fasten, fix, affix, bond, attach, stick, to stick; (n, v) plaster
gnaw: (v) chew, fret, crunch, corrode, nibble, eat, erode, to bite, munch, masticate; (n, v) chafe
gnome: (n) dwarf, goblin, imp, axiom, sprite, lamia, jinn, elf, brownie, byword, pixie
godmother: (n) sponsor, godchild, godparent
gods: (n) gallery
goings-on: (n) occasion, affair, episode, eventuality, extramarital affair, matter, romance, occurrence, proceeding, transaction, incident
goliath: (n) colossus, monster, behemoth, titan, devil, demon; (adj) Cyclops, Brobdingnagian, atlas, Antaeus, mammoth
good-bye: (n) bye, farewell, goodbye, goodby, vale, adios, cheerio
good-for-nothing: (adj) worthless, feckless, pointless, asinine, unworthy; (n) loafer, do-nothing, rascal, rotter, cur, trash
good-looking: (adj) beautiful, comely, handsome, pretty, fine, fair, lovely, gorgeous, charming, bonny, graceful
goodly: (adv) benignly, kindly, strongly, rightly, graciously, virtuously, soundly, uprightly; (adj) sizable, handsome, respectable
good-natured: (adj) kindly, friendly, kind, obliging, gracious, kind-hearted, genial, good, bland, sweet, good-tempered

goodness: (adj, n) generosity, kindness, gentleness; (n) good, excellence, benefit, virtue, worth, morality; (adj) favor, beneficence. ANTONYMS: (n) evil, wickedness, badness, corruptness, bad, immorality, corruption
goodwill: (n) friendship, friendliness, amity, grace, kindness, benevolence, altruism, readiness, favour, neighborliness, sympathy. ANTONYMS: (n) hostility, malice, opposition, malevolence
gore: (v) butt, stab, spike, spear, push, stick, impale, pierce; (n) bloodshed, gusset, carnage
gosling: (n) gesling, goose, young goose
gossip: (n, v) chatter, rumor, chitchat, gab, talk, babble, natter, tattle; (n) chatterbox, conversation, small talk. ANTONYM: (n) truth
gout: (n) taste, relish, arthritis, go-out; (v) cephalalgia, earache, otalgia, odontalgia, neuralgia, lumbago, sciatica
gown: (n) robe, clothing, cassock, vestment, wrapper, overclothes, outerwear, uniform, tunic, clothes; (v) clothe
gradual: (adj) progressive, gentle, slow, deliberate, moderate, shading off, sequential, imperceptible; (adj, adv) piecemeal; (n) grail; (adv) gradually. ANTONYMS: (adj) dramatic, instant, unexpected, steep, abrupt, quick, rapid
grain: (adj, n) crumb; (n) bit, berry, fragment, cereal, scrap, kernel, speck, atom, grist, character. ANTONYM: (n) lot
grammatical: (adj) grammatic, grammar. ANTONYM: (adj) ungrammatical
grandeur: (n) dignity, splendor, magnitude, brilliance, glory, pomp, elegance, majesty, magnificence, grandness; (adj, n) solemnity. ANTONYMS: (n) modesty, simplicity
grandfather: (n) gramps, grandad, grandpapa, grandpa, grandsire, granddaddy, ancestor, father's father, paternal grandfather, father, forefather
grandly: (adv) splendidly, gorgeously, magnificently, regally, majestically, beautifully, stately, grandiosely, illustriously, superbly, greatly. ANTONYMS: (adv) simply, humbly
grasp: (adj, n, v) catch; (n, v) clutch, clasp, hold, clinch; (v) comprehend, embrace, grapple, apprehend, conceive, cling. ANTONYMS: (n, v) Miss; (v) overlook, lose, give; (n) ignorance
grasping: (adj) avaricious, covetous, acquisitive, greedy, avid, voracious, rapacious, grabby, mercenary, stingy; (n) seizing. ANTONYMS: (adj) generous, altruistic
grassy: (adj) verdant, gramineous, weedy, herby, woody, fertile, blossoming, abundant, leafy, lush, flourishing. ANTONYMS: (adj) grassless, urban, withering
grate: (v) grind, creak, scrape, abrade, gall, gnash, fret, rub, aggravate, provoke; (n) lattice
gratification: (adj, n) delight; (n, v) content; (n) enjoyment, pleasure, satisfaction, fruition, complacency, joy, luxury, treat, fulfillment. ANTONYMS: (n) dissatisfaction, disenchantment, dismay, discontent, anxiety
gratified: (adj) glad, satisfied, pleased, delighted, happy, thankful, grateful, content, complacent, comfortable, cheerful
gratify: (v) delight, please, appease, accommodate, satisfy, amuse, suit, indulge, cater; (n, v) humor; (adj) contented. ANTONYMS: (v) dissatisfy, displease, disappoint
gratifying: (adj) agreeable, pleasant, enjoyable, delightful, pleasurable, rewarding, welcome, satisfying, nice; (adj, v) grateful; (v) gratify. ANTONYMS: (adj) disappointing, unwelcome, unrewarding, frustrating, disagreeable, heartbreaking, annoying, unpleasant
gratingly: (adv) roughly, raspingly, hoarsely, stridently, raucously, gruffly, grindingly, annoyingly, jarringly, gravelly, irksomely
gratitude: (n) appreciation, thanks, thank, acknowledgement, acknowledgment, appreciativeness, feeling, appreciate, grateful, thanksgiving, kindness. ANTONYMS: (n) ingratitude, ungratefulness
gratuitously: (adv) needlessly, spontaneously, complimentarily, freely, unnecessarily, groundlessly, unwarrantedly, pointlessly, wantonly, voluntarily, superfluously
grave: (adj) solemn, serious, critical, earnest, dangerous, sedate, sad, grand; (adj, v) severe, acute; (v) engrave. ANTONYMS: (adj) frivolous, funny, cheerful, carefree, slight, nonchalant, trivial, stable, minor, insignificant, favorable
gravely: (adv) seriously, soberly, severely, solemnly, badly, staidly, momentously, heavily, earnestly, weightily, grievously. ANTONYMS: (adv) lightheartedly, mildly, slightly; (adj) soft
graven: (adj) carved, engraved, etched, sculptured, sculptile, sculpted, inscribed, carven
graveyard: (n) burial ground, churchyard, necropolis, burying ground, burial site, site, burial place, radioactive cemetery, memorial park, morgue
gravity: (n) solemnity, earnestness, gravitation, graveness, gravitational attraction, weight, seriousness, significance, severity, sedateness; (n, v) poise. ANTONYMS: (n) insignificance, lightheartedness, triviality, cheerfulness, levity
greatcoat: (n) coat, topcoat, capote, chesterfield, surcoat, Ulster
greed: (n) cupidity, covetousness, avariciousness, desire, appetite, rapacity, voracity, voraciousness, gluttony, stinginess, insatiability. ANTONYMS: (n) moderation, temperance
greediness: (n) avarice, cupidity, covetousness, eagerness, gluttony, selfishness, avidity, miserliness, hunger, stinginess, voracity. ANTONYM: (n) moderation
greedy: (adj) avid, gluttonous, desirous, grasping, acquisitive, glutton, piggish, voracious, selfish; (adj, v) avaricious, covetous. ANTONYMS: (adj) temperate, ascetic, unconcerned, abstemious, moderate
greens: (n) greenness, chard, vegetables, vegetable, green vegetables, spinach, common sorrel, tossed salad, sprout, pigweed, leafy vegetable
greet: (n, v) receive; (v) address, acknowledge, hail, welcome, cry, salute, bid, weep, meet, recognize
greeting: (n) welcome, salutation, address, greet, compliments, acknowledgment, accost, hello, hullo, nod; (v) salute. ANTONYM: (n) goodbye
greetings: (n) greeting, respects, compliments, consolation, regards, commend, good wishes, commendation, induction, draft

grief: (adj, n, v) affliction; (n) dolor, anguish, distress, agony, pain, wound, chagrin, concern; (n, v) regret; (adj) sore. ANTONYMS: (n) joy, happiness, comfort, content, peace
grievance: (n) injustice, wrong, grudge, affliction, protest, objection, disaffection, discontentment, dissatisfaction; (adj) annoyance; (adj, n) distress. ANTONYMS: (n) justice, praise
grieved: (adj) sore, sad, sorry, sorrowful, upset, woeful, pained, affected, brokenhearted
grim: (adj) austere, glum, cheerless, dour, ghastly, dreary, forbidding, dark, dire, hard, dismal. ANTONYMS: (adj) cheerful, bright, funny, kindly, hospitable, pleasant, promising, simple, wonderful
grimace: (n, v) scowl, glower, sneer, smile, roar; (n) face, mop, mouth, expression; (v) pull a face, wince
grimy: (adj) dirty, filthy, grubby, dingy, unclean, impure, nasty, begrimed, squalid, messy, muddy. ANTONYMS: (adj) pure, pleasant
grinning: (n) grin, smile, facial expression, facial gesture, smiling; (adj) beaming
grip: (n, v) clutch, clasp, hold, gripe; (v) catch, cling, apprehend, fascinate, embrace; (n) handle, bag. ANTONYMS: (n, v) release; (n) separation
groan: (n, v) grumble, murmur, cry, sigh, mutter, squeak, rumble, scrape; (v) howl, complain; (n) complaint
groove: (n, v) channel, rut, chamfer, score, crease; (v) flute; (n) ditch, cut, track, custom, notch. ANTONYMS: (n) bump, ridge
groping: (adj) fumbling, gropingly, investigative, incertain, blind, probing, tentative, uncertain, unsure, hesitant, exploratory
growl: (adj, n, v) snarl; (n, v) roar, bark, howl, yap, moan, thunder; (v) gnarl, mutter, complain, croak
grown-up: (adj) mature, big, full-grown, ripe, grown, full-fledged
grudge: (v) begrudge, covet; (n, v) spite; (n) malice, anger, umbrage, resentment, rancor, gall, pique, feud
gruel: (n) mess, congee, loblolly, paste, waste, porridge, mush, pap, skilly, wet feed
grumbling: (n) grumble, growling, murmur, murmuring, mutter, muttering; (adj, n) rumbling; (adv) grumblingly; (adj) grouchy, grumpy, irritable
grunt: (v) growl, croak, mutter, complain, murmur, moan, clamor, mumble; (n, v) cry; (n) groan, cottonwick
guessed: (adj) rude, inscrutable
guinea: (n) greaseball, Republic of Guinea, poultry, change, shilling, penny, doit, domestic fowl, farthing, fowl, French Guinea
guns: (n) weapons, weaponry, arms, arsenal, armaments, artillery
gymnastics: (adj) gymnastic; (n) athletics, calisthenics, athletic sports, callisthenics, acrobatics; (v) gladiatorship
habit: (n) clothing, practice, dress, garb, attire, convention, character, ritual, addiction, clothes; (n, v) use. ANTONYM: (n) innovation
habits: (n) behavior, decorum, pratique
habitual: (adj, n) common, frequent, usual; (adj) chronic, conventional, confirmed, accustomed, natural, commonplace, everyday, ordinary. ANTONYMS: (adj) occasional, infrequent, mild, irregular, exceptional, erratic, abnormal, innovative
habitually: (adv) usually, ordinarily, normally, generally, regularly, frequently, commonly, routinely, wontedly, conventionally, commonplacely. ANTONYMS: (adv) unusually, seldom, erratically, exceptionally, occasionally
hack: (v) chop, cut down, rip, gash, mutilate, fell; (adj, v) chop up; (n) hacker, drudge, nag, incision
haft: (n) heft, knob, helve, grip, hilt, holder, stem, tiller, treadle, trigger, key
hairs: (n) hair
hale: (adj) healthy, whole, sturdy, strong, sane, rugged, robust; (v) drag; (adj, n) well, hearty, sound. ANTONYM: (adj) unwell
hammer: (v) strike, beat, knock, bang, tap, forge, thrash, hit; (n, v) pound, club; (n) gavel
handicraft: (n) craft, handcraft, handiwork, mystery, occupation, handwork, trade, art, profession, artifice, job
handkerchief: (n) hankie, kerchief, bandanna, cravat, hanky, wipe, bandana, collar, shawl; (n, v) napkin; (v) sudary
handling: (n) treatment, management, administration, dealing, conduct, transaction, use, running, touch, fielding, employment
handsome: (adj) fair, beautiful, fine, generous, charming, comely, attractive, bountiful, considerable, bonny, prepossessing. ANTONYMS: (adj) ugly, unattractive, meager, ungenerous, measly, plain
handsomely: (adv) liberally, prettily, magnanimously, bonnily, largely, lovely, charmingly, finely, generously, good-lookingly, smartly. ANTONYM: (adv) poorly
handy: (adj) convenient, adroit, apt, expert, clever, deft, dexterous, good, accessible; (adj, n) available; (adj, n, v) ready. ANTONYMS: (adj) clumsy, fixed, inept, unwieldy, inconvenient, faraway, far, difficult, distant, cumbersome, worthless
hanger: (n) strap, hook, dropper, suspension, support, coat hanger, rack, hangman, suspender, peg, dowel
hanging: (n) execution, curtain, arras, wall hanging; (adj) suspended, pendent, pendant, pendulous, hung, pending; (n, v) suspension
hanker: (v) long, aspire, desire, crave, yearn, wish, longing, sigh, languish, pine, itch
happily: (adv) fortunately, joyously, joyfully, merrily, luckily, gladly, blissfully, cheerfully, felicitously, providentially, successfully. ANTONYMS: (adv) miserably, unhappily, sadly, unfortunately, unsuccessfully, reluctantly, gloomily, discontentedly, despondently, negatively, grudgingly
happiness: (n) delight, merriment, ecstasy, welfare, gladness, luck, cheerfulness, blessedness, bliss, felicity, contentment. ANTONYMS: (n) sadness, despair, grief, misery, dissatisfaction, seriousness, dullness, discontent, dejection, gloominess, displeasure
harden: (adj, v) habituate, inure; (n, v) strengthen; (v) season, consolidate, freeze, congeal, coagulate, calcify, petrify; (n) brace. ANTONYMS: (v) soften, liquefy, dissolve, weaken, melt
hardening: (v) harden; (n) solidification, curing, sclerosis, callosity, calcification, symptom, inurement, hardener; (adj) reprobation, perversion
hard-featured: (adj) ugly
hard-hearted: (adj) remorseless,

ruthless, unkind, obdurate, pitiless, heartless, merciless, unaffected, unconcerned, uninterested, cold-blooded

hardships: (n) difficulty

hard-won: (adj) difficult

hard-working: (adj) studious, industrious, painstaking, active, dedicated, tireless

hardy: (adj, n) hard, fearless, rugged, daring; (adj) sturdy, manly, audacious, brave, strong, robust, gallant. ANTONYMS: (adj) weak, delicate, tender, feeble

hare: (n) leporid, cony, puss, doe, jackrabbit, coney; (adj) antelope, courser, eagle, gazelle, greyhound

harmless: (adj) safe, benign, inoffensive, hurtless, innocent, innoxious, intact, simple; (n) silly; (adj, n) foolish; (v) weaponless. ANTONYMS: (adj) lethal, damaging, destructive, poisonous, toxic, serious, offensive, malicious, hurtful, noxious, unpleasant

harvest: (n, v) fruit; (v) gain, glean, gather, amass, get, reap, pick; (n) ingathering, profit, produce

haste: (n, v) hurry, dash, dispatch, rush; (n) celerity, expedition, rapidity, speed, bustle, hastiness, quickness. ANTONYMS: (n) delay, patience, forethought, caution

hasten: (adj, n, v) speed, quicken; (v) expedite, advance, hurry, hie, dash, rush; (n, v) further, forward, dispatch. ANTONYMS: (v) linger, retard, amble

hastened: (adj) careless

hastening: (n) quickening, speed, hurrying, speeding up, faster, fast, stepping up

hastily: (adv) hurriedly, rapidly, quickly, rashly, promptly, suddenly, thoughtlessly, impetuously, swiftly, imprudently, speedily. ANTONYMS: (adv) carefully, unhurriedly, industriously, sensibly, prudently, late, calmly, thoroughly, patiently, gradually, cautiously

hasty: (adj) fast, abrupt, cursory, fleet, sudden, rash, impetuous, careless, speedy, hurried, quick. ANTONYMS: (adj) deliberate, considered, leisurely, sensible, gradual, thorough, cautious, careful, roundabout, prudent, patient

hated: (adj) despised, disliked, not liked, reviled, scorned, unloved, unpopular. ANTONYM: (adj) precious

hateful: (adj) disgusting, execrable, nasty, abominable, hideous, despicable, repulsive, distasteful, foul; (adj, v) odious, obnoxious. ANTONYMS: (adj) delightful, kind, nice, benign, desirable

hatred: (n, v) detestation, enmity, animosity; (n) aversion, antipathy, disgust, abhorrence, grudge, anger, abomination, hostility. ANTONYMS: (n) liking, adoration, affection, attraction, goodwill, kindness, delight, friendliness, admiration

haunt: (n, v) resort, ghost; (n) den, hangout, home; (v) pursue, follow, stalk, afflict, persecute; (adj) harass

haunted: (adj) ghostly, ghostlike, phantom, taken up, preoccupied, possessed, unearthly, magical, mad, infatuated, concerned

heap: (n, v) pile, aggregate, amass; (n) collection, accumulation, mound, mass, group, lot; (v) bank, collect. ANTONYM: (v) tidy

heaps: (adj, n) lots, much; (n) masses, oodles, piles, stacks, many, tons, plenty, lot, accumulation. ANTONYM: (adj) inadequate

hearer: (n) audience, listener, eavesdropper, observer, perceiver, earwitness, attendant, attendee, attender, audient, beholder

hears: (v) hear

hearth: (n) fire, oven, fireside, stove, chimney, focus, furnace, dwelling, kiln, home, abode

hearty: (adj) heartfelt, healthy, genial, sturdy, cheering, fervent, wholehearted, lusty, enthusiastic, convivial; (adj, n) well. ANTONYMS: (adj) unhealthy, frail, old, weak, sluggish, unwholesome, meager

heathen: (adj, n) gentile, ethnic; (n) infidel, idolater, paynim, heretic; (adj) heathenish, irreligious, giaour, godless, barbaric

heaven: (n) Eden, firmament, bliss, Elysium, sky, nirvana, glory, Elysian Fields, Garden of Eden, utopia; (adj) celestial. ANTONYM: (n) misery

heavens: (n) firmament, heaven, sky, welkin, sphere, atmosphere, celestial sphere, space, skies, area, vault of heaven

hector: (adj, v) domineer; (v) browbeat, bluster, bullyrag, tyrannize, swagger, ballyrag; (adj) hectic, Amazon, dictate; (n) Captain Bobadil. ANTONYM: (v) encourage

hectoring: (adj) blustering, vaporing, roistering, crushing, swashing

hedge: (v) fudge, dodge, elude, evade, skirt, duck, avoid, circumvent, equivocate; (n) barrier, hedging. ANTONYM: (v) confront

hedgerow: (n) fence, fencing

heed: (n, v) consideration, concern, regard, mind, attention, notice; (n) caution, advertence, advertency; (v) attend, hear. ANTONYMS: (n, v) disregard; (n) inattentiveness

heedlessness: (n) neglect, rashness, carelessness, inattention, inadvertence, recklessness, indifference, inattentiveness, foolhardiness, disregard, temerity. ANTONYMS: (n) mindfulness, caution

heel: (n) blackguard, dog, counter, cad, villain, scoundrel, shoe, sole, bounder, tree rest; (v) lean

heightened: (adj) excited, intense, irritate, keen, resonant, sensitive

heights: (n) place, elevation, high places, high, heaven

helpfulness: (n) use, usefulness, avail, kindness, friendliness, cooperation, utility, benefit, good will, humanity, kindliness. ANTONYMS: (n) uncooperativeness, cruelty, inefficiency, malice

helpless: (adj, v) forlorn, destitute, abandoned; (adj) powerless, weak, defenseless, disabled, impotent, feeble, hopeless, unable. ANTONYMS: (adj) strong, independent, capable, invulnerable, armed, powerful, impervious

hereditary: (adj) familial, ancestral, inherent, heritable, inherited, inborn, congenital, innate, patrimonial, native, heredity

heresy: (n) paganism, heathenism, false doctrine, nonconformity, revisionism, unbelief, orientation, apostasy, fallacy, schism, dissent

hers: (pron) she, his; (adj) own

hesitating: (adj) indecisive, irresolute, undecided, doubtful, hesitate, reluctant, faltering, unwilling, hesitancy, backward, hesitatingly

hesitatingly: (adv) indecisively, irresolutely, hesitating, waveringly, doubtfully, undecidedly, vacillatingly, falteringly. ANTONYM: (adv) unhesitatingly

hide: (n, v) cover, disguise, shelter, veil; (adj, v) obscure; (n) fur, fell, coat; (v) bury, mask; (adj, n, v) darken. ANTONYMS: (v) show, expose, express, divulge, unearth, amplify, advertise, clarify

hiding: (n) covering, concealment, concealing, beating, screening, thrashing, flogging, rout, burial, drubbing, ambush
hinder: (v) impede, resist, check, hamper, obstruct, curb, handicap, delay; (n, v) bar; (adj) posterior, hind. ANTONYMS: (v) help, facilitate, assist, prompt, encourage, promote, allow, support, accelerate
hindered: (adj) obstructed, blocked, delayed, stalled, slowed down, slow, in an inferior position, in a weak position, impedite, thwarted, frustrated
hindering: (adj) obstructive, clogging, preclusive, meddlesome, impedimental, counter, obstruent, blocking up; (n) hindrance, impedition; (v) hinder
hint: (v) suggest; (adj, n) trace; (n) suggestion, intimation, inkling, cue, allusion; (n, v) tip, touch, dash; (adj, v) intimate. ANTONYM: (n) overtone
hinted: (adj) veiled, roundabout, not explicit, implicit, coded, oblique
hire: (v) employ, charter, enlist, take, rent, take on, retain; (n, v) wage; (n) employment, salary, engagement. ANTONYM: (v) fire
hissing: (adj) sibilant, sibilous, sibilatory; (n) whistling, heckling, scoffing, sibilance, taunts, sibilation, white noise; (v) fizzle. ANTONYM: (n) applause
hitherto: (adv) as yet, yet, so far, up to now, until now, thus far, before, hereunto, to date, still, all the same
hitting: (n) striking, collision, header, grounder, smash, beating, thrashing, contact, contusion, drumming; (adj) convincing. ANTONYM: (n) victory
hoard: (v) amass, gather, collect, garner; (n, v) cache, store, stock, heap, bank, stash; (n) accumulation. ANTONYMS: (v) squander, disperse, spend, use
hoarding: (n) billboard, hoard, garner, signboard, cumulation, board, save, hoards, store, notice, poster
holes: (n) cavity, holes tow
hollow: (adj, n) blank; (n) cavity, depression, cave, dell; (adj) empty, false; (adj, n, v) concave; (n, v) excavate, dent, scoop. ANTONYMS: (adj) convex, sincere, true, full, meaningful, cramped, valid; (n) hump, bump, hill, lump
holly: (n) Charles Hardin Holley, common winterberry holly, buddy holly, deciduous holly, evergreen winterberry, flowering tree, gallberry, angiospermous tree
homage: (n) allegiance, obeisance, fealty, accolade, honor, loyalty, worship, veneration, deference, devotion, compliment
homeward: (adj) oriented, orientated
honesty: (adj, n) candor, justice, fidelity, equity; (n) integrity, fairness, candidness, probity, frankness, rectitude, faith. ANTONYMS: (n) dishonesty, wickedness, treachery, deceit, deception, deviousness, decadence, affectation, caution, evasiveness, injustice
honour: (n) fame, award, dignity, homage, celebrity, accolade, reputation; (n, v) honor; (v) respect, celebrate, dignify. ANTONYMS: (n, v) dishonor; (v) disrespect
honourable: (adj) estimable, reverend, venerable, glorious, honorable, distinguished, above-board, good, worthy, right, noble
honoured: (adj) esteemed, respected, worthy
honours: (n) first, honors, degree, academic degree
hook: (n, v) crook, catch, draw, bend, trap, lure; (n) fishhook, claw, crotchet; (v) fasten, hitch. ANTONYMS: (v) undercharge, detach, undo
hopeful: (adj) confident, auspicious, bright, optimistic, sanguine, rosy, probable, likely, expectant, upbeat; (n, v) candidate. ANTONYMS: (adj) desperate, pessimistic, gloomy, pained, doubtful, bad, unhopeful, unlikely, unpromising, down
hopeless: (adj) incurable, despondent, forlorn, disconsolate, desperate, impossible, useless, abject, despair, dismal, irreparable. ANTONYMS: (adj) cheerful, competent, promising, optimistic, encouraging, helpful, useful, successful, practical, laudable, effective
horn: (n) car horn, antler, klaxon, cornet, French horn, ivory, foghorn, cornu, alarm, trumpet, arm
hornpipe: (n) bolero, stockhorn, rigadoon, saraband, folk dancing, pibgorn, folk dance, reel
horseback: (n) hogback, body part
hospitable: (adj) affable, receptive, gracious, cordial, generous, amiable, convivial, genial, pleasant, warm, to enjoy having guests. ANTONYMS: (adj) unwelcoming, inhospitable, sinister, hostile
hospitality: (n) entertainment, generosity, friendliness, cordiality, welcome, cordial reception, kindness, amiability, warmth, solicitously, politely. ANTONYMS: (n) frostiness, inhospitality
housewife: (n) homemaker, mistress, housekeeper, matron, wife, hostess, hussif, dame, woman of the house, lady of the house, busy bee
hovering: (adj) suspended, poised, impending, flying, high
howling: (n) howl, cry; (adj) fierce, fantastic, gross, glaring, marvelous, wonderful, wondrous; (adj, n) weeping, sniveling
humble: (v) demean, humiliate, mortify; (n, v) disgrace, debase; (adj, n, v) abase; (adj) base, lowly, unassuming, docile, low. ANTONYMS: (adj) impressive, arrogant, haughty, imposing, conceited, pompous, snooty, overbearing, presumptuous, proud, exalted
humbly: (adv) lowly, meanly, modestly, submissively, low, shyly, lowlily, naturally, regretfully, remorsefully, repentantly. ANTONYMS: (adv) conceitedly, haughtily, pompously, ostentatiously, unrepentantly, affluently, brashly, pretentiously
humour: (n) fun, wit, witticism, body fluid, temper, mood, amiability, drollery, disposition; (adj) humorous; (v) gratify
hung: (n) hanging; (v) Heng; (adj) fatigued, puzzled, decorated
hunger: (n, v) thirst, want, wish, itch; (n) craving, appetite, eagerness, famine; (v) crave, ache; (adj) hungry. ANTONYMS: (n) moderation, aversion, dislike, apathy
hungry: (adj) eager, avid, famished, starving, esurient, greedy, ravenous, desirous, meager, starveling; (v) starve. ANTONYMS: (adj) full, satiated, sated, thirsty, unconcerned, moderate, healthy, disinterested
hunt: (n, v) search; (v) course, follow, hound, rummage, forage, prey, dog, go after, persecute; (n) battue. ANTONYMS: (v) find, precede
hunted: (adj) coursed, afraid, wanted, required, sought, sought after; (n) victim
hunter: (n) fowler, huntsman, trapper, Nimrod, seeker, tracker, falconer, hawker, courser, watch,

ticker
hunting: (n, v) chase; (v) battue; (n) exploration, pursuit, search, ducking, beagling, coursing, frisking, venery, shooting
hurried: (adj) fast, sudden, speedy, rapid, quick, swift, headlong, abrupt, cursory, precipitate, prompt. ANTONYMS: (adj) unhurried, leisurely, considered, patient, meticulous, thorough
hurry: (n) haste; (n, v) bustle, hasten, dispatch, flurry, rush; (v) scurry, dash, accelerate, expedite, run. ANTONYMS: (n) slowness, calmness, patience, unimportance; (v) dawdle, delay, linger, crawl, amble; (intj) wait
hurrying: (n) hastening, speed, quickening, rushing, early, speeding, speeding up, stepping up, amphetamine, forward, eager
husbandry: (n) cultivation, farming, economy, frugality, culture, conservation, thrift, tillage, dairying, horticulture, gardening
hush: (adj, n, v) calm, silence, quiet, still, lull; (n) peace; (v) shut up, gag, quieten, muffle; (adj, v) soothe. ANTONYMS: (n) noise, turmoil; (v) Louden
hushed: (adj) calm, silent, still, subdued, placid, muffled, noiseless, soft, soundless, tranquil, gentle. ANTONYM: (adj) noisy
huskiness: (n) gruffness, harshness, strength, croakiness, toughness, stridency, ruggedness, roughness, brusqueness, curtness, formidability. ANTONYM: (n) smoothness
husky: (adj) hoarse, gruff, burly, big, dry, raucous, beefy, strapping, brawny, sturdy; (n) Eskimo dog. ANTONYMS: (adj) high, puny, small, smooth, soft
hymn: (n) song, canticle, chant, anthem, carol, chorale, doxology; (v) glorify, laud, sing, extol
hypocritical: (adj, adv) deceitful, false, counterfeit; (adj) insincere, disingenuous, dishonest, pharisaical, sanctimonious, hollow, hypocritic; (n) hypocrisy. ANTONYMS: (adj) genuine, straightforward
hypothesis: (n) conjecture, assumption, guess, theory, speculation, belief, idea, surmise, postulation, presupposition, opinion. ANTONYMS: (n) fact, practice
hysterical: (adj, n) feverish; (adj) wild, violent, eccentric, frenzied, emotional, fitful, febrile, erratic; (n) fanatical, hysterics. ANTONYMS: (adj) relaxed, composed, restrained
idiot: (n) dolt, blockhead, dunce, dimwit, moron, cretin, ass, imbecile, oaf, changeling, idiocy. ANTONYM: (n) intellectual
idle: (adj) lazy, indolent, inactive, free, unfounded, fruitless, baseless, groundless, frivolous, empty, disengaged. ANTONYMS: (adj) active, employed, industrious, energetic, meaningful, productive, worthwhile, diligent; (v) change, run, work
idleness: (n) lethargy, laziness, torpor, inactivity, idling, unemployment, sloth, inaction, inertia, faineance, idlesse. ANTONYMS: (n) energy, activity, bustle, liveliness, responsibility
ignorance: (n) illiteracy, nescience, folly, unwisdom, innocence, denseness, ignorancy, stupidity, obtuseness, tabula rasa, unawareness. ANTONYMS: (n) intelligence, acquaintance, education
ill-favoured: (adj) ill-favored
ill-natured: (adj) cantankerous, peevish, sour, surly, catty, crabbed, gruff, disagreeable, malignant, malicious, malevolent
illuminated: (adj) lit, lighted, luminous, enlightened, clear, light, shining, irradiated, lighter, Lighty, irradiate
illumination: (n) brightness, illuminance, lighting, light, explanation, elucidation, edification, luminousness, luminosity, illustration; (adj, n) irradiation. ANTONYMS: (n) education, knowledge, confusion
illusion: (n, v) delusion; (n) fantasy, apparition, deception, magic, fancy, deceit, dissimulation, phantom, trick, vision. ANTONYMS: (n) reality, fact
ill-will: (n) enmity
imaginary: (adj) fictitious, unreal, false, mythical, illusory, ideal, hypothetical, visionary, fictional, notional, chimerical. ANTONYMS: (adj) real, palpable, actual, concrete, prosaic, normal, true
imaginative: (adj) inventive, ingenious, original, clever, fanciful, fantastic, resourceful, artistic, imaginal, whimsical, imaginary. ANTONYMS: (adj) unimaginative, logical, dull, pedestrian, trite, unoriginal
imagined: (adj) fanciful, notional, unreal, fancied, fictitious, nonexistent, unseen, hypothetical, feigned, dubious, doubtful
imagining: (n) conception, daydream, fantasy, opinion; (v) imagine; (adj) imaginant
imminent: (adj) forthcoming, coming, close, future, near, pending, approaching, at hand, menacing, threatening, prospective. ANTONYMS: (adj) remote, past
impartiality: (adj, n) justice, honesty; (n) fairness, disinterestedness, candor, equality, indifference, detachment, evenhandedness; (adj) impartial, fair play. ANTONYMS: (n) injustice, bias, inequality, partiality, prejudice, subjectivity
impatience: (n) annoyance, eagerness, anger, intolerance, restlessness, fidget, nervousness, fidgetiness, enthusiasm, edginess; (adj) nonendurance. ANTONYMS: (n) calmness, endurance, apathy
impatient: (adj) eager, anxious, petulant, fidgety, vexed, keen, edgy, quick, avid, irritable, fretful. ANTONYMS: (adj) patient, enduring, unenthusiastic, calm, happy, relaxed, slow
impatiently: (adv) petulantly, restlessly, keenly, intolerantly, hastily, avidly, uneasily, enthusiastically, edgily, fidgetily, restively. ANTONYMS: (adv) uncomplainingly, calmly, unenthusiastically, lightly
impelled: (adj) prompted, provoked, determined, compulsive, encouraged, goaded, motivated, bound
impenetrable: (adj) impassable, thick, incomprehensible, hard, mysterious, unfathomable, unintelligible, impervious, opaque, heavy, obscure. ANTONYMS: (adj) penetrable, readable, straightforward, apparent, simple, sparse, vulnerable, accessible, transparent, understandable, open
imperatively: (adv) commandingly, imperiously, urgently, pressingly, authoritatively, obligatorily, essentially, magisterially, necessarily, instantly, critically
imperativeness: (n) instancy, exigency, urgency, closet, crush, insistency, immediateness, force per unit area, fourth estate, immediacy,

press
imperceptible: (adj) invisible, intangible, insensible, faint, evanescent, inaudible, negligible, indiscernible, unseen, unnoticeable, gentle. ANTONYMS: (adj) obvious, overwhelming, clear, visible, perceptible, heavy, noticeable, definite, considerable, conspicuous, strong
imperceptibly: (adv) unnoticeably, gradually, slightly, invisibly, gently, quietly, softly, observably, indistinctly, scarcely, hardly. ANTONYMS: (adv) obviously, visibly, audibly, conspicuously, perceptibly, heavily, clearly, strongly
imperfectly: (adv) faultily, defectively, badly, deficiently, incompletely, partially, poorly, inadequately, sketchily, incorrectly, halfway. ANTONYMS: (adv) perfectly, flawlessly, correctly, well
impersonal: (adj) neutral, objective, detached, cold, impartial, indifferent, aloof, personal, equitable, remote, clinical. ANTONYMS: (adj) friendly, friend, involved
impetuously: (adv) rashly, impulsively, vehemently, precipitately, fiercely, headily, passionately, intensely, fierily, spontaneously, thoughtlessly. ANTONYMS: (adv) deliberately, sensibly, patiently
impious: (adj) godless, ungodly, disrespectful, profane, unholy, sinful, unhallowed, wicked, iniquitous, irreligious, irreverent. ANTONYMS: (adj) reverent, devout, restrained, good
implacable: (adj) cruel, remorseless, irreconcilable, pitiless, merciless, grim, unappeasable, deadly, mortal, relentless, unforgiving. ANTONYMS: (adj) placable, unrelenting
implied: (adj) understood, tacit, indirect, oblique, silent, inferential, inherent, ulterior, latent, involved, contained. ANTONYMS: (adj) direct, explicit, overt
imply: (n, v) denote, betoken; (v) connote, hint, allude, intimate, entail, mean, indicate, convey; (adj, v) involve
importunate: (adj) annoying, exigent, pressing, insistent, bothersome, pestiferous, pestilent, instant, obdurate, demanding, pleading. ANTONYM: (adj) feeble
imposing: (adj, n, v) impressive; (adj, n) noble, commanding, solemn; (adj) dignified, grandiose, stately, distinguished, regal, lofty, baronial. ANTONYMS: (adj) unimpressive, modest, unimposing, weak, undignified, lowly
impossibility: (n) impossibleness, option, nonexistence, absurdity, inability, impracticability, alternative, choice, contradiction, contradiction in terms, doubtfulness. ANTONYMS: (n) possibility, probability
impotence: (n) weakness, inability, feebleness, debility, impuissance, powerlessness, impotency, erectile dysfunction, infertility, quality, imbecility
impregnated: (adj) fertilised, fertilized, full, saturated, made pregnant, sated, fertile, adequate, copious, inseminated, ample
impress: (n, v) mark, print, stamp; (v) move, affect, inscribe, instill, touch, emboss, inculcate; (n) impression
impressed: (adj) touched, bewildered, amazed, susceptible, stupefied, stunned, confused, bemused; (v) imprinted, stamped, carved. ANTONYM: (adj) unimpressed
impressible: (adj) impressionable, sensitive, soft, delicate, sensible, adhesive, easily affected, fine, gentle, courteous, easy
impressions: (n) impersonation, imitation
imprisonment: (n) captivity, confinement, incarceration, durance, detention, arrest, immurement, internment, duress; (adj, n) bondage; (v) imprison. ANTONYMS: (n) release, freedom
impulse: (n) pulse, urge, impulsion, force, motive, whim, drive, goad, motivation, momentum, incentive. ANTONYMS: (n) aversion, disincentive, disinclination
inability: (n) disqualification, insufficiency, incapacity, incompetence, impotence, impotency, feebleness, helplessness, inadequacy, weakness, inaptitude. ANTONYMS: (n) ability, capability, power, capacity
inanity: (n) absurdity, vacuity, folly, idiocy, stupidity, silliness, emptiness, nonsense, mindlessness; (adj) inane, vanity. ANTONYMS: (n) sense, logic
inarticulate: (adj) unintelligible, silent, vague, muffled, incoherent, mute, incomprehensible, unarticulate, speechless, guttural, fuzzy. ANTONYMS: (adj) articulate, eloquent, fluent, distinct, talkative
incalculable: (adj) countless, innumerable, numberless, boundless, inestimable, immense, infinite, myriad, numerous, invaluable, unpredictable. ANTONYMS: (adj) calculable, negligible, limited, worthless, tiny, slight, finite, few, definite, small, minor
incessantly: (adv) constantly, endlessly, continually, perpetually, continuously, unceasingly, eternally, persistently, unremittingly, unendingly, steadily. ANTONYMS: (adv) sporadically, briefly
inch: (n) in, bit, column inch, morsel; (v) crawl, creep, ease; (adj) tatter, mite, seed, shive
incipient: (adj) initial, budding, nascent, imperfectly formed, commencing, first, undeveloped; (adj, v) introductory; (v) inceptive; (n) beginning
incitement: (n) impetus, incentive, incitation, encouragement, fomentation, stimulus, stimulation, provocation, motive, impulse; (n, v) goad. ANTONYMS: (n) prevention, deterrent, disincentive
inclination: (n, v) desire, bent; (n) fancy, affection, tendency, leaning, drift, appetite, dip, proclivity, bias. ANTONYMS: (n) disinclination, reluctance, aversion, indifference, unwillingness, antipathy, dislike, horror
inclined: (adj, v) given; (adj) prone, willing, oblique, apt, predisposed, ready, minded, likely, liable, bowed. ANTONYMS: (adj) reluctant, unwilling, disinclined, horizontal, unbiased, vertical, impervious
incomings: (n) income, innings, return, proceeds, revenue
incompatible: (adj) incongruous, inappropriate, inconsistent, discrepant, discordant, conflicting, irreconcilable, clashing; (adj, v) antagonistic, repugnant, hostile. ANTONYMS: (adj) consistent, matching, identical, befitting, complementary, congenial, synergistic, friendly
incompetence: (n) inability, inaptitude, inadequacy, disqualification, ineptitude,

impotence, ineptness, incompetency, insufficiency, incapability; (adj) inefficiency. ANTONYMS: (n) efficiency, skill, capability, effectiveness, ability

incongruous: (adj) inappropriate, improper, absurd, inapt, incompatible, conflicting, inconsistent, incoherent, inexpedient; (adj, n) contradictory, dissonant. ANTONYMS: (adj) appropriate, befitting, consistent, reasonable

inconsistent: (adj) incoherent, incompatible, inconsequent, conflicting, absurd, discrepant, illogical, erratic; (adj, n) contradictory, contrary, discordant. ANTONYMS: (adj) constant, reliable, ordered, predictable, corresponding, dependable, flawless, usual, fixed

inconvenience: (n, v) trouble, incommode; (v) discommode, disoblige, annoy, disturb, disquiet; (n) disadvantage, difficulty, nuisance, unsuitableness. ANTONYMS: (n) expediency, advantage; (v) help, please

incorporated: (adj) incorporate, united, integrated, combined, embodied, unified, built-in, merged, amalgamated, conjugate, conjoint

incredible: (adj, n) astonishing, marvelous; (adj, v) inconceivable; (adj) fabulous, extraordinary, unbelievable, implausible, fantastic, unlikely, preposterous, wonderful. ANTONYMS: (adj) credible, believable, conceivable, unspectacular, likely, mundane, unremarkable, plausible, awful, sensible, real

incur: (n, v) contract; (v) catch, get, incite, begin, cause, encounter, experience, obtain, suffer, receive

indebted: (adj) grateful, appreciative, thankful, obliged, liable, insolvent, broke; (prep) beholden, debted; (n) debtor; (v) owe. ANTONYM: (adj) ungrateful

indefinable: (adj) ineffable, unspeakable, vague, indeterminate, undefinable, inexpressible, elusive, indefinite, undefined, nondescript, equivocal. ANTONYMS: (adj) concrete, precise

indications: (n) discriminating marks, indicia, chance

indifferent: (adj) apathetic, impassive, cold, cool, callous, fair, insensible, unconcerned, careless, dull, average. ANTONYMS: (adj) enthusiastic, fervent, keen, obsessive, energetic, eager, involved, surprised, exceptional, concerned, shocked

indifferently: (adv) carelessly, coldly, nonchalantly, listlessly, unconcernedly, uninterestedly, neutrally, middlingly, casually, unbiasedly, disinterestedly. ANTONYMS: (adv) passionately, obsessively, carefully, eagerly, energetically, warmly, anxiously, enthusiastically, sympathetically

indignant: (adj) angry, incensed, furious, enraged, wrathful, hurt, rage, provoked, hot, anger, irate. ANTONYMS: (adj) cool, content, unaffected

indignation: (n) anger, resentment, displeasure, grudge, umbrage, rage, outrage, exasperation, choler, dudgeon; (adj, n) wrath. ANTONYMS: (n) contentment, pleasure

indispensable: (adj, v) necessary, imperative, requisite; (adj) obligatory, fundamental, required, mandatory, vital, urgent, absolutely necessary; (v) needful. ANTONYMS: (adj) dispensable, nonessential, optional, marginal, unnecessary, worthless, minor

indisposed: (adj) ill, ailing, loath, sick, averse, poorly, sickly, reluctant, unwilling, unwell, diseased. ANTONYMS: (adj) inclined, willing, keen, disposed

indolence: (n) laziness, inaction, lethargy, inertia, inactivity, listlessness, slowness, torpor, sluggishness, apathy; (adj, n) sloth. ANTONYMS: (n) energy, nimbleness, activity, bustle, liveliness, vigor

induce: (v) generate, tempt, cause, impel, bring, create, draw, engender, beget, get, infer. ANTONYMS: (v) prevent, restrain

indulged: (adj) pet, privileged, cherished, admired

indulgence: (adj, n) gratification, delight; (n) allowance, extravagance, debauchery, hobby, tolerance, luxury, enjoyment, leniency, pardon. ANTONYMS: (n) denial, virtue, intolerance, uprightness, necessity, indifference, dismay, severity

industrious: (adj) diligent, assiduous, indefatigable, busy, energetic, hardworking, laborious, tireless, earnest, keen, enterprising. ANTONYMS: (adj) indolent, idle, destructive, weary, careless

industriously: (adv) diligently, painstakingly, busily, sedulously, tirelessly, untiringly, eagerly, studiously, laboriously, carefully, conscientiously. ANTONYMS: (adv) wearily, carelessly

inexperienced: (adj) naive, young, callow, ignorant, unsophisticated, new, unexperienced, clumsy; (adj, v) raw; (v) green; (n) inexperience. ANTONYMS: (adj) trained, sophisticated, skilled, knowledgeable, expert, accustomed, sharp, seasoned

inexplicable: (adj) incomprehensible, mysterious, unaccountable, inscrutable, unfathomable, enigmatic, baffling, indecipherable, unexplained, incognizable, preternatural. ANTONYMS: (adj) understandable, explicable, mundane, apparent, explainable, straightforward, natural, legible

inexpressible: (adj, v) indescribable; (adj) ineffable, unspeakable, unutterable, indefinable, incommunicable, nameless, untold, beyond description, unexpressible, undefinable. ANTONYM: (adj) definite

infallibly: (adv) unerringly, unfailingly, inerrably, assuredly, certainly, firmly

infancy: (n) babyhood, cradle, beginning, birth, genesis, minority, early childhood, youth, nonage, adolescence, early days. ANTONYM: (n) maturity

inference: (n) corollary, implication, illation, conclusion, assumption, judgment, surmise, derivation, analogy, guess, result. ANTONYM: (n) fact

influx: (n) afflux, concourse, incursion, invasion, flow, introduction, affluence, inpouring, intrusion, irruption, arrival. ANTONYM: (n) departure

informed: (adj) cognizant, educated, conscious, knowledgeable, familiar, apprised, wise, conversant, experienced, sensible; (adv) abreast. ANTONYMS: (adj) uninformed, unconcerned

ingenious: (adj) adroit, artful, clever, cunning, deft, expert, creative, imaginative, cute, acute, able. ANTONYMS: (adj) impulsive, naive, unoriginal, inept

ingeniously: (adv) artfully, cleverly, adroitly, skillfully, inventively, resourcefully, shrewdly, imaginatively, cunningly, craftily, artistically. ANTONYM: (adv) ineptly
ingenuously: (adv) artlessly, sincerely, innocently, candidly, naively, frankly, outspokenly, plainly, naturally, unsophisticatedly, straightforwardly. ANTONYMS: (adv) artfully, dishonestly, pretentiously
inhabitants: (n) population, citizens, populace, folk, country, community, abode, group, inhabitation, nation, natives
inhabited: (v) populous, full of people, arrayed, clothed, dressed, accustomed, habited; (adj, v) peopled; (adj) occupied, settled, housing. ANTONYMS: (adj) unoccupied, uninhabited, business
inherently: (adv) naturally, intrinsically, natively, innately, fundamentally, basically, instinctively, integrally, inbornly, inbredly, constitutionally
inheritance: (adj, n) heritage; (n) heredity, heirloom, birthright, bequest, legacy, dowry, estate, appanage, heirship; (v) descent
inherited: (adj) inborn, genetic, familial, ancestral, transmissible, congenital, inherent, incarnate, transmitted, instinctive, intuitive
initiated: (adj) capable, fitted, efficient, competent, fit for, primed, prepared, educated, experienced, finished, corpulent
injunction: (n) dictate, command, behest, bidding, commandment, fiat, direction, enjoinment, enjoining, order, instruction
injurious: (adj) evil, harmful, hurtful, destructive, bad, disadvantageous, detrimental, adverse, deleterious, inimical, damaging. ANTONYMS: (adj) healing, favorable, healthy, helpful, advantageous, beneficial
injustice: (n) iniquity, wrong, unfairness, bigotry, wickedness, prejudice, crime; (adj, n) injury, evil, harm, damage. ANTONYMS: (n) fairness, evenhandedness, reasonableness, goodness, tolerance
inmate: (n) captive, convict, gaolbird, denizen, prisoner, con, patient, jailbird, lodger, occupant, resident. ANTONYM: (n) outpatient
innocence: (n) blamelessness, chastity, ignorance, ingenuousness, purity, gullibility, artlessness, innocent, simplicity, harmlessness, guiltlessness. ANTONYMS: (n) sophistication, experience, fault, dirtiness, wariness, dishonesty
innocent: (adj) chaste, artless, clear, ingenuous, innocuous, guileless, guiltless, ignorant, unsophisticated, spotless, naive. ANTONYMS: (adj) culpable, responsible, wicked, wary, experienced, corrupt, worldly, unfair, meaningful, offensive, jaded
inoffensive: (adj, n) harmless, innocent; (adj) innocuous, innoxious, safe, unoffending, euphemistic, hurtless, pleasant, gentle, tame. ANTONYMS: (adj) rude, unsavory, unpleasant, harmful, dysphemistic, malicious, exciting
inquire: (v) demand, ask, explore, enquire, inspect, research, consult, pry, request, wonder; (n, v) question. ANTONYM: (v) answer
inquiries: (n) investigation, examination, study, enquiries, enquiry, inquiry, exploration
inquiring: (adj) inquisitive, quizzical, interested, analytical, probing, intrusive; (adj, n) questioning; (v) inquire; (n) enquiry, question, examination. ANTONYM: (adj) uninquiring
inroad: (n) foray, attack, incursion, invasion, aggression, penetration, offence, influx, intrusion; (n, v) raid; (v) invade
insect: (n) worm, flea, hymenopteran, hymenopteron, earwig, dirt ball, homopteran, hemipteran, gallfly, fish, biting louse
insects: (n) Arthropoda, phylum Arthropoda, Insecta, Hexapoda, crustaceans, class Insecta, class Hexapoda, centipedes
insensible: (adj) imperceptible, numb, unconscious, callous, dull, unaware, apathetic, impassive, indiscernible, comatose, impassible. ANTONYMS: (adj) sensible, conscious, sensitive, awake, alive, compassionate, concerned, aware
inseparable: (adj) indissoluble, inextricable, inherent, indiscerptible, built-in, indispensable, infrangible, innate, unseparable; (v) severable, unseparated. ANTONYMS: (adj) separable, dividable, isolatable
insight: (n) vision, acumen, understanding, perception, penetration, brainwave, apprehension, acquaintance, knowledge, idea, foresight. ANTONYMS: (n) hindsight, foolishness, ignorance, clumsiness
insincerity: (n, v) duplicity; (n) falsity, falseness, cant, dishonesty, hollowness, dissimulation, affectation, disingenuousness, faithlessness; (v) double dealing. ANTONYMS: (n) sincerity, genuineness
insist: (v) affirm, assert, contend, demand, claim, asseverate, declare, maintain, urge, importune, press. ANTONYMS: (v) request, deny
insistence: (n) stubbornness, adherence, pressure, steadfastness, press, insistency, urgency, insisting, instancy, persistence, imperativeness. ANTONYMS: (n) flexibility, weakness
inspirit: (adj, v) encourage, enliven, exhilarate, embolden, gladden; (v) animate, inspire, hearten, comfort, spirit, incite
instance: (n) exemplar, case, time, illustration, sample, affair, pattern, chance, cause; (v) exemplify, illustrate
instant: (adj, n) present; (adj) immediate, prompt; (n) flash, minute, jiffy, point, second; (adj, v) exigent; (adj, n, v) pressing, urgent. ANTONYMS: (n) age, eternity; (adj) considered, delayed, slow
instantaneous: (adj) immediate, prompt, sudden, precipitate, momentary, abrupt, precipitous, precipitant, swift, momentaneous, quick. ANTONYMS: (adj) gradual, delayed, considered
instinctive: (adj) inherent, inborn, automatic, natural, mechanical, spontaneous, intuitive, unconscious, gut, reflex; (adj, v) involuntary. ANTONYMS: (adj) learned, stilted, deliberate, factual, systematic, trained, spiritual
instinctively: (adv) involuntarily, mechanically, spontaneously, automatically, intuitively, inherently, automaticly, unconsciously, impulsively, unthinkingly, instinctually. ANTONYMS: (adv) consciously, objectively
instructed: (adj) taught, tutored, enlightened, intelligent, arranged, instruct, experienced, qualified; (v) erudite, lettered, leaned
instruction: (n) charge, direction, education, guidance, prescription, guideline, teaching, information,

injunction; (n, v) advice, counsel. ANTONYM: (n) plea

instrument: (n) channel, deed, tool, pawn, apparatus, agency, document, expedient, appliance, gear; (n, v) implement

insult: (n, v) contumely, affront, abuse, flout, outrage, wound, taunt; (n) disgrace, indignity, contempt; (v) cut. ANTONYMS: (n, v) compliment, praise; (v) flatter, consecrate; (n) privilege

intend: (v) destine, design, mean, aim, determine, denote, contemplate, plan, purpose, consider, believe. ANTONYM: (v) improvise

intense: (adj) acute, deep, brilliant, fervent, fierce, ardent, burning, severe, furious, extreme; (adj, v) vivid. ANTONYMS: (adj) dull, calm, weak, slight, imperceptible, superficial, shallow, gentle, dim, insignificant, relaxed

intensely: (adj, adv) extremely; (adv) strongly, powerfully, severely, violently, vehemently, acutely, keenly, brightly, profoundly, fiercely. ANTONYMS: (adv) mildly, calmly, gently, dully, indifferently, impassively, jokingly, slightly, hardly, superficially, unexceptionally

intensity: (adj, n) strength; (n) force, forcefulness, volume, depth, fierceness, emphasis, energy, forte, fury, ferocity. ANTONYMS: (n) weakness, dullness, indifference, mildness, softness, scarcity, quietness, calmness, apathy, gentleness, faintness

interference: (n) hindrance, disturbance, handicap, blocking, intercession, inhibition, encumbrance, barrier, intervention, block; (v) interfere. ANTONYMS: (n) nonintervention, help

interior: (adj) inner, internal, inland, inward, midland, central, domestic, innermost; (n) hinterland, bosom; (adj, n) center. ANTONYMS: (adj, n) exterior; (adj) external, foreign, outer, outdoor; (n) shore, shoreline, edge

intermediate: (adj, n) average, intermediary, mean, mediocre; (adj) middle, mid, moderate, halfway; (adj, v) mediate; (v) interjacent, intercede. ANTONYMS: (adj) last, extreme

intermittent: (adj) broken, sporadic, fitful, discontinuous, spasmodic, irregular, periodic, uneven, recurrent; (adj, v) occasional; (adv) intermittently. ANTONYMS: (adj) constant, repeated, continual, steady, regular, recurring, frequent, spasmodic, unbroken, common

interpret: (v) clarify, understand, elucidate, illustrate, read, construe, comment, gloss, render, explain, explicate

interrogation: (n) inquiry, question, query, doubt, enquiry, hearing, quiz, problem, demand, interview, interrogative

interrupted: (adj) discontinuous, fitful, intermittent, discontinued, disconnected, unsuccessive, intervallic, episodic, gaping, periodic; (prep) interrupt

interruption: (n) disruption, intermission, halt, pause, suspension, discontinuance, hiatus; (n, v) break, hindrance, impediment; (v) interrupt. ANTONYMS: (n) permanence, help, respect

interval: (n) intermission, interruption, distance, break, interlude, hiatus, interim, pause, period, respite, gap. ANTONYM: (n) intensification

intimacy: (adj, n) familiarity, acquaintance; (n) closeness, fellowship, association, friendship, intercourse, affair, camaraderie, conversance, confidence. ANTONYMS: (n) distance, formality

intimated: (adj) tacit, furtive, dejected

intimately: (adv) nearly, familiarly, personally, secretly, internally, privately, narrowly, thoroughly, near, well, thickly. ANTONYM: (adv) superficially

intolerable: (adj) unbearable, insupportable, painful, obnoxious, detestable, inexcusable, deplorable, undesirable, hard, excruciating, difficult. ANTONYMS: (adj) bearable, tolerable, acceptable, reasonable, nice, understandable, lovable, excusable, inoffensive, manageable

intolerably: (adv) excruciatingly, unbearably, insufferably, unendurably, insupportably, unfeasibly, impossibly, horribly, unpardonably, inexcusably, unforgivably. ANTONYMS: (adv) tolerably, excusably, bearably, acceptably, pleasantly, understandably

intoxication: (n) inebriation, inebriety, poisoning, tipsiness, fascination, grogginess, ecstasy, daze, excitement, euphoria, wine

intrusion: (n) infringement, encroachment, disturbance, interruption, inroad, trespass, invasion, violation, incursion, disruption, entry

invading: (adj) invade, incursive, attacking, impertinent, abhorrent, abusive, aggressive, assailant, disgusting, disagreeable, distasteful

invariable: (adj) fixed, consistent, even, immutable, steady, unchanging, stable, uniform, set, undeviating, unchanged. ANTONYMS: (adj) changing, dynamic, erratic, irregular, varied

invented: (adj) fictional, fabricated, imaginary, unreal, fake, mythical, legendary, fictive, fancied, fabulous, ben trovato. ANTONYMS: (adj) genuine, factual, true, actual

inversion: (n) reversal, turnover, transposition, everting, eversion, anastrophe, retroversion, subversion, movement, negation, reversion

invisible: (adj) obscure, hidden, inconspicuous, intangible, sightless, concealed, impalpable, occult, indiscernible, inappreciable, unseen. ANTONYMS: (adj) obvious, conspicuous, noticeable, palpable

invite: (v) tempt, allure, bid, call, entice, ask, summon, attract, receive, solicit; (n) invitation. ANTONYMS: (v) elect, repel

inviting: (adj) attractive, alluring, engaging, tempting, enticing, appealing, magnetic, captivating, prepossessing, seductive, appetizing. ANTONYMS: (adj) offensive, repellent, uninviting, unappealing, unwelcoming, bleak, uncomfortable

involuntary: (adj) instinctive, unconscious, unintentional, forced, mechanical, unthinking, reluctant, unwilling, compulsory, inadvertent, accidental. ANTONYMS: (adj) voluntary, intentional, intended, willing

inward: (adj) inner, intrinsic, internal, interior, intestine, inherent, domestic; (adv) inwardly, inwards, in; (n) innards. ANTONYMS: (adj, adv) outward; (adj) outgoing, external

inwardly: (adv) inside, interiorly, innerly, within, secretly, intrinsically, intimately, privately, spiritually, incomingly; (adj)

inwards. ANTONYM: (adv) openly
irascibility: (n) irascibleness, touchiness, temper, acrimony, testiness, irritability, asperity, spleen, edginess, quick temper, bad temper
irregularity: (n) abnormality, anomaly, eccentricity, inequality, deviation, aberration, constipation, exception, unevenness, variation; (adj, n) deformity. ANTONYMS: (n) symmetry, normality, regularity, dependability, equality, frequency, evenness, consistency, predictability, smoothness
irrelevant: (adj) extraneous, inapplicable, insignificant, impertinent, unsuitable, inconsequential, inapposite, trivial, unrelated, unimportant, petty. ANTONYMS: (adj) admissible, significant, applicable, essential, important, pertinent, appropriate
irreparable: (adj) incurable, hopeless, irremediable, irrecoverable, incorrigible, irredeemable, irretrievable, remediless, irreclaimable, unalterable, irrevocable. ANTONYMS: (adj) impermanent, repairable, temporary, superficial
irresolution: (n) indecisiveness, hesitation, doubt, irresoluteness, indetermination, shilly-shally, uncertainty, hesitancy, incertitude, dubiety, suspense. ANTONYMS: (n) resolution, decisiveness, determination
irrevocably: (adv) finally, irreversibly, conclusively
irritable: (adj) fractious, irascible, edgy, cantankerous, touchy, petulant, excitable, cross, sensitive, grumpy, disagreeable. ANTONYMS: (adj) calm, happy, cheerful, amiable, patient, pleasant, stable, courteous; (n) cheeriness
irritated: (adj) annoyed, exasperated, incensed, enraged, aggravated, furious, irate, inflamed, sore, displeased, provoked. ANTONYMS: (adj) calm, pleased, patient, contented
irritation: (n) exasperation, anger, annoyance, displeasure, bother, excitation, temper, excitement, irritability, vexation, annoying. ANTONYMS: (n) satisfaction, balm, calm, calmness, equanimity, patience
isolation: (n) estrangement, privacy, alienation, insulation, dissociation, secrecy, loneliness, solitude, seclusion, insularity, desolation. ANTONYMS: (n) companionship, inclusion, unity, kinship, company, cheerfulness, integration
itch: (n) urge, desire, impulse, scabies; (v) irritate, prickle, tingle, scratch, chafe; (adj) itchy; (n, v) wish. ANTONYMS: (n) aversion, disinclination
iterated: (adj) frequent
jacks: (n) knucklebones, carangids, Carangidae
jagged: (adj) rough, angular, irregular, crooked, craggy, toothed, scraggy, rugged, bumpy, jaggy; (adj, n) ragged. ANTONYMS: (adj) smooth, even, straight, blunt, level
jail: (v) imprison, incarcerate, confine, detain, immure; (n) prison, cell, clink, hoosegow; (n, v) cage, jug. ANTONYMS: (v) acquit, free, liberate; (n) freedom
jealous: (adj) distrustful, envious, covetous, suspicious, jealousy, resentful, invidious, green, grudging, jaundiced, attentive. ANTONYM: (adj) trusting
jealousy: (n) suspicion, jealous, jealousness, envy, envious, alertness, distrust, contention, competition, scruple, qualm
jeering: (adj, n) mocking; (n) jeer, scoffing, mockery, derision, scoff, scorn, banter; (adj) taunting, gibelike; (v) deride. ANTONYM: (n) clapping
jesting: (adj) jocular, jocose, facetious, humorous, playful; (n) banter, humor, comedy, pleasantry, fun, joke. ANTONYM: (n) tragedy
jestingly: (adv) facetiously, jocularly, jocosely, in jest
jewel: (n) gemstone, darling, diamond, jewelry, trinket, treasure, ornament, idol; (adj, n) bijou, precious stone; (adj) brilliant
jewellery: (n) jewel, bijou, gem, earring, band, clip, bracelet, bead, bangle, bijouterie, pearls
jingo: (n) jingoist, patriot; (adj) fighting
jocosely: (adv) waggishly, jokingly, humorously, comically, in jest, facetiously, sportively, playfully, funnily, gaily, jestingly
jogging: (n) run, fast motion, joggling, impulse tachometer, exercising, exercise, inching
joining: (n) connection, junction, connexion, union, combination, association, concatenation, attachment, assembly, fastening; (adj) connecting
joke: (n, v) banter; (n) hoax, fun, quip, gag, caper, game, antic, prank, humor; (v) tease
jollity: (adj, n) glee, joviality; (n) merriment, cheerfulness, festivity, frolic, gladness, hilarity, mirth, gaiety; (adj) jocundity. ANTONYMS: (n) seriousness, misery
jolly: (adj) gay, cheerful, happy, festive, genial, bright, cheery, merry, jocund; (v) chaff; (adv) lively. ANTONYMS: (adj) gloomy, miserable, serious
jovial: (adj, n) gay; (adj) jolly, genial, glad, festive, joyful, gleeful, merry, jocund, cheerful, blithe. ANTONYMS: (adj) miserable, gloomy, frosty, serious, hostile
joviality: (n) glee, cheerfulness, happiness, mirth, merriment, gaiety, festivity, conviviality, hilarity, geniality; (adj) jocundity. ANTONYMS: (n) misery, sadness
joyful: (adj) gay, glad, elated, cheerful, gleeful, cheery, delighted, joyous, jolly, blissful, blithe. ANTONYMS: (adj) miserable, sorrowful, unhappy, despairing, unpleasant, staid, sorry, disappointed, depressed, heavy
joyous: (adj) happy, gleeful, elated, jolly, glad, gay, jovial, merry, festive, cheerful, jocund. ANTONYMS: (adj) despairing, joyless, miserable
judicious: (adj, v) discreet; (adj) careful, discerning, sensible, prudent, rational, sagacious, sound, cautious, reasonable, advisable. ANTONYMS: (adj) stupid, tactless, indiscriminate, reckless, illogical, extreme, untimely
judiciously: (adv) prudently, sagaciously, shrewdly, discreetly, discerningly, politically, cautiously, logically, rationally, sensibly, soundly. ANTONYMS: (adv) foolishly, injudiciously, unwisely, illogically, imprudently
jump: (n, v) bound, start, bounce, hop, caper, startle, dive, rise; (v) spring, hurdle; (adj, v) skip. ANTONYMS: (n, v) decrease; (v) surface, drop, hesitate
jumping: (n) saltation, leaping, header, start, propulsion; (adj) moving, festive; (v) bounding, salient, dancing; (adv) leapingly
justifiable: (adj) legitimate, defensible, excusable, lawful,

logical, legal, reasonable, admissible, rightful, warrantable, sound. ANTONYMS: (adj) inexcusable, unreasonable, invalid, gratuitous, unjustifiable, illogical, unlawful, unworthy, untenable

justify: (v) explain, exonerate, vindicate, confirm, absolve, defend, deserve, apologize, claim, palliate; (n, v) warrant

justly: (adv) accurately, fairly, correctly, honestly, lawfully, properly, exactly, uprightly, legitimately, impartially, purely. ANTONYMS: (adv) wrongly, unfairly, unjustifiably, unjustly, unlawfully, sinfully, falsely, immorally

juvenile: (adj) youthful, childish, immature, puerile, young, babyish, callow; (n) youngster, child, youth, teenager. ANTONYMS: (adj, n) adult; (adj) mature, old, sensible

keener: (v) Indian giver, floater, repeater

keenly: (adv) eagerly, zealously, piercingly, acutely, cuttingly, ardently, strongly, lively, penetratingly, fervently, avidly. ANTONYMS: (adv) unenthusiastically, apathetically, faintly, reluctantly, patiently, passively, halfheartedly, vaguely

keenness: (n) ardor, eagerness, enthusiasm, acumen, sharpness, zeal, acuity, quickness, diligence, fervor; (n, v) edge. ANTONYMS: (n) unwillingness, dullness, indifference, faintness, dislike, patience, reluctance

kerchief: (n) napkin, neckerchief, hood, snood, headscarf, muffler, scarf, shawl, coif, babushka, Kercher

kettle: (n) caldron, boiler, can, kettledrum, urn, kettleful, teakettle, timpani, bolthead, alembic, capsule

kick: (v) grumble, complain; (n) bitch, beef, thrill, gripe, charge, excitement; (n, v) recoil, spurn, protest. ANTONYMS: (v) start; (n) bore

kindliness: (n) friendliness, geniality, amiability, grace, benignancy, mercy, tenderness, compassion, charity, consideration, helpfulness. ANTONYMS: (n) indifference, reserve, cruelty

kindly: (adj) kind, amiable, genial, charitable; (adv) sympathetically, benevolently, tenderly; (adj, n) benign, gentle, sympathetic, benevolent. ANTONYMS: (adv) harshly, nastily, callously, cruelly, sharply, disagreeably, grumpily, malevolently; (adj) upsetting, unfeeling, sour

kindness: (n) generosity, clemency, compassion, grace, good will, graciousness, humanity, goodness, affection; (adj, n) courtesy, gentleness. ANTONYMS: (n) miserliness, spite, nastiness, callousness, cruelty, unfriendliness, maliciousness, thoughtlessness, sourness, severity, disservice

kinship: (n) consanguinity, affinity, connection, cognation, kin, relationship, relation, brotherhood, filiation, blood, alliance. ANTONYM: (n) isolation

kiss: (n, v) caress, brush, embrace, touch; (n) osculation, salute, lip, Kiss of peace, kiss hands; (v) osculate, love

kissing: (n) hugging, cuddling, fondling, arousal, foreplay, necking; (adj) embracing, adhering closely, billing, clinging, interosculant

kitten: (n) cat, foal, kitty, colt, foetus; (v) teem, flower, fructify, bear fruit, farrow, EAN

knee: (n) bracket, articulation, joint, kneel, knee joint, genu, articulatio genus, scythe, zigzag, sickle, bend

knees: (n) knee

knit: (adj, v) tie, lace; (v) plait, intertwine, bind, join, pucker, fasten, interlace; (adj) stitch, knitted

knitting: (n) knitwork, needlework, needlecraft, knitted fabric, web, braid, weave, creating from raw materials, knit stitch

knock: (n, v) hit, blow, bang, bump, tap, strike, whack, bash, punch, cuff; (n) crash. ANTONYMS: (n) improvement, boost; (v) encourage, bolster, approve

knocking: (n) sound, bang, beating, hit, rap, strike, belt, criticism, bash

knotted: (adj) knotty, gnarled, gnarly, involved, entangled, complicated, tangled, matted, knobbed, fastened; (adj, v) kinky. ANTONYMS: (adj) straight, tidy, relaxed

knowingly: (adj, adv, v) wittingly; (adv) intentionally, consciously, designedly, shrewdly, on purpose, purposely, wisely, wilfully, ingeniously; (adv, v) by design. ANTONYMS: (adv) accidentally, unintentionally, unwittingly, openly

knuckle: (n) articulation, knee, elbow, fist, ankle, sickle, zigzag, scythe; (v) submit, succumb, surrender

laboured: (adj) labored, forced, arduous, hard, strained, difficult, laborious, grievous, grave, weighty, unnatural

labouring: (adj) drudging, work, working, busy, toiling

lace: (v) entwine, interlace, braid, bind; (adj, v) tie, string; (n) lacing, ribbon, edging; (n, v) net, rope. ANTONYMS: (v) untie, untwine, unpick

lacking: (adj) incomplete, inadequate, defective, absent, short, wanting, destitute, empty, devoid, insufficient; (adj, prep) without. ANTONYMS: (adj) full, plentiful, burdened, capable, adequate, perfect, present, complete, privileged; (prep) with, including

lain: (adj) artless, unsophisticated, unaffected, naive, untutored, simple, pure, natural, native, inartificial

lamb: (n) sheep, lambkin, dear, hogget, kid, mutton, inexperienced person, honey, white meat, pork; (adj) naive

landed: (adj) land, territorial, allodial, predial

landlord: (n) laird, proprietor, landlady, owner, landholder, land holder, land owner, innkeeper, property owner, slumlord, publican. ANTONYM: (n) occupant

lantern: (n) beacon, light, dormer, tube, lighting fitting, bedside light, street light, street lamp, oil lamp, lime light, lanthorn

lapse: (n, v) decline, drop, mistake; (adj, n, v) fall; (v) expire, elapse, collapse, go by; (n) oversight, error, fault. ANTONYMS: (v) behave, start, rise, renew, improve

lash: (n, v) beat, chastise, scourge, goad; (v) flog, bind, batter; (adj, v) strap, tie, lace; (n) hit. ANTONYMS: (v) unlash, untie

lass: (n) girl, lassie, damsel, young woman, young girl, fille, miss, Jeune fille, bobbysocker, bobbysoxer, woman

lasting: (adj) abiding, everlasting, firm, eternal, enduring, continuous, permanent, constant, perpetual, tough; (adj, v) fast. ANTONYMS: (adj) fleeting, impermanent, superficial, ephemeral, caducous, unstable, occasional, insubstantial, erratic, acute, fickle

latch: (v) bar, fasten, grab; (n, v) bolt; (adj, n, v) lock; (n) hasp, clasp, door

latch, hook; (adj) link, yoke
lately: (adv) tardily, newly, freshly, belatedly, slowly, latterly, deadly; (adj, adv) anew, late, afresh; (adj) recent
laudanum: (v) carminative, antispasmodic, demulcent, lullaby, sedative, lenitive; (n) tincture of opium
laughing: (adj) merry, smiling, laughable, jolly, gay, lighthearted, frolicsome, playful, pleased, dizzy; (adv) laughingly. ANTONYM: (adj) serious
laughter: (n) amusement, fun, guffaw, merriment, chortle, chuckle, mirth, hilarity, giggle, derision, happiness. ANTONYMS: (n) sadness, gloom, despair, boredom, misery, despondency
laurel: (n) bays, honor, rose-laurel, cassia, cinnamon, sweet bay, Daphne, bay tree, palm, garland, fame
lavender: (adj) lilac, purple, puce, light purple, pale purple, indigo, chromatic; (adj, n) violet, amethyst; (n) shrub, genus Lavandula
lawful: (adj) legal, just, rightful, constitutional, true, right, justifiable, licit, regular; (n, v) allowable; (adj, v) permissible. ANTONYMS: (adj) unlawful, prohibited, unconstitutional
lawfulness: (n) legitimacy, validity, legitimateness, genuineness, right, allowableness
laying: (n) egg laying, placing, parturition, place, repose, setting, put, position, lay, oyster park, oviposition
layman: (n) commoner, layperson, laic, laymen, laity, lay person, outsider, common man, civilian, lay reader, common person. ANTONYM: (n) clergyman
lazy: (adj) indolent, inert, idle, inactive, shiftless, slothful, faineant, slow, sluggish; (adj, n) drowsy, dull. ANTONYMS: (adj) diligent, active, prompt, vigorous, industrious, keen, productive
leads: (n) slating, pieced leads, slates, pile driving leads, tiling
leaf: (n) page, folio, foliage, petal, frond, leafage, slip, verdure, leaflet; (n, v) sheet; (v) leave
lean: (adj, v) gaunt; (adj) emaciated, thin, bony, lank; (n, v) bend, tilt, slant, list, careen; (n) inclination. ANTONYMS: (adj) plump, rich, chubby, greasy, stout; (v) straighten, repel
leaned: (v) erudite, lettered; (adj) tilted, inclined, educated
leaning: (adj, n) bent, disposition, partiality; (n) propensity, bias, tendency, incline, lean; (adj) tilted, canted, inclined. ANTONYMS: (n) antipathy, dislike; (adj) upright
leap: (n, v) bound, spring, bounce, caper, dive, vault, lunge; (v) dance, hop, start; (n) curvet. ANTONYMS: (n, v) plummet; (v) surface, drop, hesitate; (n) slump
learnt: (adj) learned
leastwise: (adv) at least, at any rate, anyway, anyhow, at the least, in any case, in any event
leather: (n) fur, fleece, skin, buckskin, fell, pelt, doeskin; (v) drub, thresh, thrash; (n, v) hit
ledge: (n) projection, bulge, jetty, board, shelf, rack, bench, hummock, protrusion, rim; (adj) escarpment. ANTONYM: (n) depression
leeches: (n) cupping, bleeding, venesection, phylum Annelida, Annelida, phlebotomy
leisurely: (adj) slow, deliberate, easygoing, leisure, at ease, unhurried, measured, idle; (adv) deliberately, slowly, at leisure. ANTONYMS: (adj) rushed, hurried, formal, vigorous, speedy, fast; (adv) formally, quickly
lend: (v) grant, give, advance, impart, bestow, contribute, borrow, bring, add, confer; (n) lending
lending: (n) lend, loaning, borrowing, usury, disposal, disposition
lengthening: (n) extension, protraction, prolongation, continuation, expansion, increasing, enlargement, perpetuation, amplification, production, continuance. ANTONYM: (n) contraction
lengthy: (adj) extended, long, wordy, protracted, copious, exuberant, elongated, prolonged, verbose, largiloquent, wiredrawn. ANTONYMS: (adj) brief, easy, quick, concise
lent: (n) Quadragesima, Lententide
lesser: (adj) less, inferior, junior, insignificant, petty, subordinate, smaller, secondary, lower, slighter, small. ANTONYMS: (adj) major, primary, senior, superior, higher, main
lesson: (n) example, education, instruction, class, learning, sermon, recitation, task, study, message; (n, v) rebuke
lessons: (n) classes, coaching, tuition, schoolwork, revision, learning, education, training
lethean: (v) forgetful, mindless; (adj) lethy
letting: (n) lease, rental, let, renting, hire, leasing, rent, belongings, permission; (adj) lenient
levity: (n) flightiness, frivolity, flippancy, buoyancy, lightness, giddiness, inconstancy, frivolousness, humorousness, jocosity; (n, v) fickleness. ANTONYMS: (n) gravity, seriousness
liable: (adj) answerable, accountable, disposed, apt, responsible, inclined, exposed, likely, subject, culpable, vulnerable. ANTONYMS: (adj) unwilling, innocent, unlikely, disinclined, impervious
lids: (n) lid
lief: (adj, v) leef; (adv) fain, willingly; (adj) glad, acceptable
lifted: (adj) raised, elevated, lift, lofty, upraised, steep
lifting: (n) rising, hoisting, plagiarism, restyling, copying, jacking; (adj) elating, enlivening, exciting, invigorating, thrilling
lighten: (v) assuage, alleviate, light, illuminate, brighten, lessen, allay, clear, mitigate, relieve, illumine. ANTONYMS: (v) darken, intensify, increase, dye, depress, aggravate, exacerbate
lightly: (adv) slightly, airily, thinly, easily, gently, light, fairly, weakly, flimsily, delicately, wantonly. ANTONYMS: (adv) seriously, heavily, thickly, sturdily, angrily, hard, harshly, densely, brightly, awkwardly
likelihood: (n) chance, odds, probability, eventuality, expectation, likeliness, prospect, expectancy, verisimilitude, appearance, option. ANTONYM: (n) improbability
likewise: (adv) besides, in addition, furthermore, alike, moreover, further, too, similarly; (adj, adv) as well, equally; (adj) even
liking: (n, v) inclination; (n) fancy, appetite, taste, fondness, predilection, affection, partiality, admiration, approval, appreciation. ANTONYMS: (n) dislike, aversion, hatred, indifference, detachment, dissatisfaction, antipathy
lilac: (adj) lavender, mauve, purple,

violet, puce, chromatic; (n) shrub, heliotrope, ash, common lilac, family Oleaceae

lily: (adj) chalk, tiger lily, snow, paper, effeminate, milk; (n) daffodil, kentan, martagon, leopard lily, ivory

limb: (n) arm, branch, member, bough, extremity, offshoot, part, leg, wing, appendage, edge

lined: (adj) wrinkled, creased, wrinkly, striped, streaked, ruled, banded, paved, worn, with stripes, windswept. ANTONYMS: (adj) smooth, plain, unlined, straight

linen: (n) fabric, flax, lingerie, doily, doyley, doyly, cambric, underwear, underclothes, hemp; (v) muslin

lingering: (adj) long, chronic, extended, dilatory, protracted, prolonged, residual, lengthy, inactive, dull; (n) delay. ANTONYM: (adj) quick

lion: (adj, n) celebrity, hero; (adj) worthy, great card, tiger; (n) Leo, cat, king of beasts, curiosity, luminary, spectacle

liquor: (n) fluid, broth, alcohol, booze, brew, brandy, arrack, spirits, schnapps; (n, v) drink; (adj, n) liquid

listener: (n, v) auditor; (n) eavesdropper, audience, observer, perceiver, hearkener, attender, attendee, attendant, beholder

listeners: (n) listener, viewers, spectators, addressees

lithe: (adj, v) limber, flexible; (adj) graceful, slender, lissom, supple, lissome, svelte, agile, ductile, elastic. ANTONYMS: (adj) clumsy, stiff, inflexible

livelong: (n) Sedum telephium, sedum, orpin, orpine; (adj) durable, lasting

lively: (adj, adv) jolly, sprightly; (adj, v) active, cheerful; (adj) energetic, agile, keen, busy, gay, fresh, jovial. ANTONYMS: (adj) lethargic, listless, inactive, unexciting, lifeless, awkward, sad, gentle, tired, insipid, subdued

liver: (n) dweller, livers, resident, inhabitant, person, human, someone, soul, individual, hepatic

livery: (adj) liverish, bilious; (n) clothing, accouterment, uniform, complexion, legal transfer, color, hue, dye, bailment

living-room: (n) sitting room

loam: (n) dirt, soil, earth, land, marl, glebe, ground, subsoil, mold, chalk, clot

loath: (adj) unwilling, disinclined, reluctant, loth, indisposed, backward, hesitant, antipathetic, antipathetical, loathe, shy of. ANTONYMS: (adj) eager, willing, disposed, keen

lock: (n, v) bar, hug; (v) close, latch, fasten, engage, hold; (adj, n) hair; (n) curl, padlock, hook. ANTONYMS: (v) open, undo, disengage, flex; (n) key; (adv) partially, partly

locked: (adj) bolted, closed, fast, barred, blocked, fixed, guaranteed, barricaded, safe, protected, fastened

locking: (n) lockup, bolting, interlocking, engagement, cordoning off, closing off, binding, guarding

locks: (n) hair, tresses, head of hair

locomotion: (n) movement, travel, motion, creeping, motive power, mobility, travelling, robot mobility, motivity; (v) clip, progress

lodge: (n, v) cabin, place, house; (adj, v) live, dwell, reside, inhabit; (n) cottage; (v) quarter, accommodate, fix. ANTONYMS: (v) dislodge, evict

lofty: (adj, v) high, elevated; (adj) exalted, eminent, arrogant, grand, tall, haughty, great, distinguished, majestic. ANTONYMS: (adj) short, lowly, base, modest, deferential, humble

logic: (n) argument, logical, sense, reasoning, reason, good sense, art of reasoning, order, logics, principle, coherence. ANTONYMS: (n) inconsistency, disorder

lone: (adj) forlorn, lonely, only, solitary, individual, single, sole, separate, isolated, one, solo. ANTONYM: (adj) attached

loneliness: (n) desolation, aloneness, isolation, solitariness, lonesomeness, bleakness, forlornness, desolateness, temperament, unhappiness; (adj, n) solitude. ANTONYMS: (n) inclusion, cheerfulness, hopefulness

lonely: (adj) deserted, lone, dreary, solitary, forsaken, desert; (adj, n) isolated, alone; (adv) lonesomely, solely, solitarily. ANTONYMS: (adj) sheltered, populous, cheerful, nearby; (n) foe

longing: (n, v) desire, aspiration; (adj) eager, wistful, nostalgic; (n) nostalgia, wish, hankering, urge, appetite; (adj, n) yearning. ANTONYMS: (n) apathy, disinclination; (adj) satisfied, unconcerned

loom: (v) appear, threaten, emerge, impend, overshadow, rise, menace, bulk large, hulk, hover; (adj, v) lower. ANTONYMS: (v) recede, retreat

loose: (adj, v) lax, dissolute; (adj, n) limp, liberal, licentious; (adj) light, vague; (v) disengage, relax, release, liberate. ANTONYMS: (adj) dense, close, taut, compressed, strict, compact, wedged, secure, strong, similar; (v) confine

loud: (adj) flashy, garish, gaudy, blatant, brassy, boisterous, high, jazzy, brazen, piercing; (adj, adv) forte. ANTONYMS: (adj) tasteful, gentle, quiet, subtle, subdued, low, muted, weak, tranquil, thin; (adv) softly

loudly: (adv) vociferously, noisily, loud, clamorously, showily, strongly, flamboyantly, obstreperously, luridly, boisterously; (adj, adv) forte. ANTONYMS: (adv) softly, thinly, silently, piano, pleasantly

loveless: (adj) unloving, unloved

lover: (n) dear, darling, fan, devotee, beau, buff, love, admirer, beloved, amorist, man

loving: (adj) fond, devoted, amorous, kind, friendly, ardent, attached, admiring, gentle, fatherly; (adj, v) tender. ANTONYMS: (adj) cold, uncaring, malicious, cruel, unloving, rough, paternal, indifferent, distant, disapproving, callous

lowered: (adj) lower, reduced, cheap, bated, humbled. ANTONYM: (adj) raised

lowering: (adj) heavy, dismal, gloomy, threatening, dark, glum, murky; (n) fall, drop, cut, decline

loyal: (adj, v) firm; (adj, n) unwavering, true, accurate; (adj) fast, steady, constant, reliable, devoted, dependable, obedient. ANTONYMS: (adj) disloyal, unfaithful, unreliable, disobedient, inconstant, treacherous, uncommitted, unpatriotic, unhelpful, fickle

lulling: (adj) drowsy, assuasive, dreamy, dull, lethargic, quietening, unalarming, dozy; (n) appeasement

luring: (adj) attractive, fetching, persuasive

luxurious: (adj) voluptuous, costly, deluxe, lavish, sumptuous, epicurean, grand, luscious, opulent, magnificent; (adj, n) lush. ANTONYMS: (adj) meager, frugal, poor, Spartan, austere, humble, unpleasant, ascetic, impoverished

luxury: (n) comfort, luxuriousness, extravagance, opulence, wealth; (adj, n) delicacy, gratification, elegance; (adj) luxurious, deluxe, indulgence. ANTONYMS: (n) paucity, necessity, poverty, filth, discomfort, bareness, shabbiness; (adj) basic, inferior, cheap, Spartan

madam: (n) dame, lady, ma'am, gentlewoman, missis, Mrs, brothel keeper, madames, signora, female, bawd

maddening: (adj) exasperating, annoying, aggravating, irritating, galling, trying, vexing, madden, bothersome, crazy, vexatious. ANTONYMS: (adj) pleasing, soothing, satisfying

madman: (n) bedlamite, maniac, crazy, loony, nut, madcap, looney, loco, sufferer, raver, nutcase

madness: (n) frenzy, insanity, lunacy, idiocy, folly, delirium, insaneness; (adj, n) furor, rage, desperation, furore. ANTONYMS: (n) sense, calmness, order

magic: (n) incantation, charm, enchantment, sorcery, legerdemain, conjuring, glamour, black magic, illusion, theurgy; (adj) magical. ANTONYMS: (n) dullness, science; (adj) everyday, prosaic, normal, natural

magnify: (v) exaggerate, enhance, aggrandize, enlarge, intensify, laud, glorify, expand, increase, extend, aggravate. ANTONYMS: (v) reduce, understate, minimize, shrink, decrease, alleviate

maid: (n) damsel, chambermaid, lass, lassie, girl, domestic, amah, virgin, maiden, housemaid, handmaid

maiden: (n) maid, girl, demoiselle, damosel, wench, fille, lass, miss; (adj) first, initiatory, unmarried

majesty: (adj, n) grandeur, splendor, nobility; (n) dignity, loftiness, magnificence, stateliness, greatness, king, royalty, highness. ANTONYMS: (n) austerity, simplicity

malicious: (adj) evil, vicious, venomous, spiteful, unkind, cruel, poisonous, mean, mischievous, pernicious, nasty. ANTONYMS: (adj) kind, harmless, kindhearted, loving, unmalicious, compassionate, good, merciful, pleasant, provoked

malignity: (n) malevolence, malignance, venom, animosity, enmity, hatred, evil, rancor, spite, malignancy, hate. ANTONYM: (n) benignity

mammy: (n) mama, mamma, mum, mummy, mommy, momma, mom, nurse, mam, nursemaid, mother

managing: (n) management, administration, control, conduct, handling, conducting, treatment; (adj) administrative, managerial, executive, sparing

manifestation: (n) appearance, indication, exhibition, expression, display, demonstration, sign, incarnation, advent, show, revelation

manners: (n) conduct, etiquette, propriety, behavior, deportment, manner, courtesy, custom, decorum, good manners, usage. ANTONYM: (n) vulgarity

manor: (n) land, mansion, manor house, castle, hall, residence, estate, seigniory, demesne, manse, dominion

mantelpiece: (n) chimneypiece, mantlepiece, shelf, chimneybreast, blanket, cape, sill, clavy, curtain, drape, drapery

manufacturing: (n) production, output, business, fabrication, industry, industrialisation, factory; (adj, n) engineering, trade; (adj) developed, manufactured

mare: (n) Maria, Money makes the mare go, broodmare, doe, hen, bitch, horse, region, part, jennet, roe

margin: (n, v) edge, border, brink, hem, verge, skirt; (n) boundary, brim, limit, bank, fringe. ANTONYMS: (n) inside, mainstream, middle

markedly: (adv) particularly, obviously, remarkably, clearly, considerably, distinctly, plainly, evidently, appreciably, patently; (adj, adv) noticeably. ANTONYMS: (adv) invisibly, slightly, moderately, vaguely, typically

marking: (n) earmark, crisscross, brand, marker, maculation, grading, stamping, authentication, lineation, cairn, cross

marrying: (adj) married

marvel: (n, v) wonder; (n) prodigy, curiosity, phenomenon, amazement, miracle, portent, marl, surprise, admiration; (v) admire. ANTONYMS: (v) disregard; (n) nightmare

masculine: (adj, v) male, not female; (adj) manly, manlike, virile, mannish, mankind, bold, manful; (n) gender, he. ANTONYMS: (adj) female, neuter

mastered: (adj) down pat, low, downhearted, perfecter, dispirited, depressed, declining, downcast, down in the mouth, cut down, beaten

masterful: (adj) consummate, imperious, dictatorial, overbearing, masterly, Masterful beggar, skillful, proficient, adept, perfect, expert. ANTONYMS: (adj) incompetent, meek, inept

mastering: (adj) victorious

masters: (n) Edgar lee Masters

mastery: (n) dominance, dominion, command, domination, ascendancy, ascendency, control, authority, mastership, supremacy, ascendance

matched: (adj) fitting, complementary, equal, fitted, duplicate, conformable, level, suitable, competitive, coordinated, corresponding. ANTONYM: (adj) wrong

mate: (n, v) equal, partner, spouse; (adj, n) companion, comrade, fellow, associate, friend; (n) compeer, consort, husband

matrimony: (n) wedding, union, marriage ceremony, nuptials, endogamy, bigamy, intermixture, alloyage, exogamy, intermarriage; (n, v) wedlock

mayhap: (adv) haply, may be, possibly, peradventure, perchance, perhaps, by chance

mazed: (adj) bewildered, haggard, at sea, baffled, befuddled, bemused, confounded, lost, perplexed, disconnected, befogged

meadow: (n) hayfield, lea, mead, grassland, plain, lawn, sward, grazing land, greensward, pasturage, paddock

meagre: (adj) exiguous, paltry, necessitous, miserable, marginal, meagerly, gaunt, emaciated, inadequate, deficient, beggarly. ANTONYM: (adj) ample

meantime: (adv) meanwhile, in the meantime, simultaneously; (n) interval, interlude, while, at times, whiles, mean, instrument

measles: (n) morbilli, rubeola, rubella, leprosy, contagion, contagious disease; (adj) polio, mumps

measured: (adj) careful, moderate, calculated, temperate, reasonable, regular, rhythmic, metrical, sober, rhythmical, leisurely. ANTONYMS: (adj) rushed, unmeasured, fast,

hurried, rapid, rash, thoughtless
mechanical: (adj, v) instinctive; (v) involuntary, blind; (adj) unthinking, automated, habitual, mechanic, perfunctory, routine, mechanized, industrial. ANTONYMS: (adj) nonmechanical, deliberate, thoughtful, unusual, enthralling, stilted
meddle: (v) intervene, interfere, intrude, monkey, interpose, fiddle, pry, dabble, interlope; (n) interference; (adj) moil. ANTONYM: (v) disregard
medicinal: (adj) medical, medicative, healing, remedial, therapeutic, healthful, medical services, theriacal, external, containing medicine; (n) drug
medicine: (n) drug, medication, medicament, therapy, physic, treatment, remedy, cathartic, medical science, preparation; (v) medicate
meditating: (n) conception
meditation: (n, v) contemplation, study; (n) consideration, reflection, deliberation, thought, introspection, musing, rumination, conception, reflexion. ANTONYM: (n) distraction
meditative: (adj, v) thoughtful, pensive; (adj) wistful, reflective, broody, museful, ruminative, musing, brooding; (v) philosophical, sedate
meditatively: (adv) thoughtfully, reflectively, wistfully, musingly, contemplatively, ponderingly, ruminatively, broodingly, thinkingly, broodily, musefully. ANTONYMS: (adv) unthinkingly, rashly
meek: (adj) lowly, docile, gentle, tame, low, submissive, compliant, mild, modest, quiet, kind. ANTONYMS: (adj) assertive, bossy, haughty, arrogant, overbearing, rebellious, disobedient, wild, harsh, brash
meekly: (adv) humbly, submissively, tamely, compliantly, obediently, docilely, peacefully, lowly, modestly, placidly, kindly. ANTONYMS: (adv) haughtily, harshly, wildly, arrogantly, assertively, brashly
melancholy: (adj, v) dreary; (adj, n) gloom, melancholic; (adj) depressed, dejected, dismal, gloomy, doleful; (n, v) low spirits; (n) gloominess, depression. ANTONYMS: (n) happiness, cheerfulness, hopefulness, optimism; (adj) happy, bright, cheery, satisfied
melody: (n) air, tune, music, measure, harmony, aria, song, strain, line, melodic phrase; (n, v) chant
melt: (v) dissolve, deliquesce, vanish, coalesce, relent, meld, fade, defrost; (adj, v) run, liquefy; (n, v) thaw. ANTONYMS: (v) freeze, solidify, cool, set
melted: (adj) molten, fluid, liquified, dissolved, liquefied, baked, fluent, touched, limpid, sorry, flowing
memento: (n) keepsake, token, souvenir, relic, remembrance, remembrancer, trophy, monument, reminiscence, trace; (v) memorabilia
memorable: (adj) extraordinary, unforgettable, signal, eventful, monumental, impressive, noteworthy, momentous, striking, catchy, lasting. ANTONYMS: (adj) unremarkable, unfamiliar, commonplace
memorial: (n) commemoration, remembrance, memento, cenotaph, headstone, monument, epitaph, memo, memory; (adj) commemorative; (n, v) record
memories: (n) recollections, reminiscences, nostalgia, memento Mori
mend: (adj, v) improve; (v) correct, cure, heal, doctor, better, amend, restore, convalesce; (n, v) fix, patch. ANTONYMS: (v) worsen, tear, smash, decline, deteriorate; (n) fracture
merciless: (adj) brutal, pitiless, unmerciful, remorseless, heartless, implacable, inhuman, hard, grim, barbarous, unfeeling. ANTONYMS: (adj) charitable, kind, humane, soft, caring, tolerant
mercy: (n) kindness, compassion, pity, favor, leniency, pardon, forgiveness, grace, charity, humanity; (n, v) quarter. ANTONYMS: (n) cruelty, harshness, unkindness, severity, mercilessness, ruthlessness, impatience, inhumanity
merge: (v) combine, amalgamate, melt, fuse, integrate, meld, commingle, unite, mix, consolidate; (adj, v) coalesce. ANTONYMS: (v) split, diverge, decentralize, unpick, segregate
merged: (adj) integrated, amalgamated, unified, incorporate, united, fused, combined, interconnected, mixed, intermingled, complex
merging: (n) confluence, concourse, merger, meeting, conflux, unification, coming together, amalgamation, merge, integration; (adj) blending. ANTONYM: (n) segregation
merit: (n, v) deserve; (adj, n) excellence, worth, desert; (n) virtue, credit, significance, value, goodness, quality; (v) rate. ANTONYMS: (n) demerit, disgrace, fault, insignificance, mediocrity, commonness
merrily: (adv) gaily, cheerfully, blithely, cheerily, gladly, gleefully, mirthfully, brightly, jovially, joyfully, gayly. ANTONYMS: (adv) sadly, anxiously, miserably, unhappily, carefully, despondently
merry: (adj) joyful, lively, cheerful, glad, jolly, facetious, frolicsome, lighthearted, festive; (adj, n) convivial, jovial. ANTONYMS: (adj) gloomy, miserable, serious, uptight
metallic: (adj) metal, harsh, metalline, metallics, hard, basic, actual, absolute, certain, chalybeate, clearly expressed. ANTONYM: (adj) soft
metamorphosis: (n) alteration, change, conversion, transformation, metamorphism, translation, transmutation, transfiguration, revision, modification, transmogrification
michaelmas: (n) Martinmas, Michaelmas Day
midday: (n) noon, noonday, noontide, afternoon, twelve noon, hour; (adj) meridian, meridional; (adj, n) culmination
midnight: (n) dark, noon, hour
mighty: (adj) immense, huge, grand, intense, high, big, forcible, strong, large, great; (adj, adv) powerful. ANTONYMS: (adj) puny, tiny, weak, insignificant
mild: (adj, n) kindly, gracious; (adj) easy, lenient, benign, docile, humble, clement, sweet, balmy, delicate. ANTONYMS: (adj) extreme, pungent, spicy, sharp, severe, scathing, incisive, hot, powerful, great, passionate
mildly: (adv) moderately, placidly, gently, tenderly, graciously, softly, lightly, kindly, calmly, sweetly, suavely. ANTONYMS: (adv) passionately, intensely, extremely, enormously, pithily, powerfully, harshly, severely, considerably

mincing: (adj) mince, prim, mannered, twee, pretentious, foppish, affected, la-di-da, simpering, nice, sentimental
minded: (prep) inclined; (adj, prep) disposed; (adj) willing, apt, ready, prone, orientated, favorable, oriented, prepared, partial
mingle: (v) compound, combine, merge, amalgamate, intermix, mix, commingle, associate, confuse, join, intermingle. ANTONYM: (v) part
mingled: (adj) miscellaneous, complex, indiscriminate, heterogeneous, medley, confused, eclectic, motley, different; (v) blended, blent
mingling: (adj) blending, merging, confluent, blended; (n) mixture, mixing, commixtion, interchange, exchange, commixture; (adv) minglingly
miniature: (adj) tiny, diminutive, slight, wee, small, minute, midget, dwarf, teeny; (adj, n) model; (n) toy. ANTONYMS: (adj) large, enormous, giant, gigantic, big
mischief: (adj, n) evil, hurt, harm; (n) damage, ill, detriment, disadvantage, devilry, caper, devilment, maleficence. ANTONYMS: (n) obedience, beneficence, help
mischievous: (adj) bad, injurious, detrimental, naughty, deleterious, impish, harmful, playful, maleficent, arch; (adj, v) hurtful. ANTONYMS: (adj) harmless, serious
misdemeanour: (n) infringement, infraction, misdemeanor, delinquency, felony, offense, offence, violation, crime, misconduct, malpractice
miser: (n) stinginess, curmudgeon, hunks, muckworm, niggard, skinflint, cheapskate, parsimony, moneygrubber, Jew, miserliness
miserable: (adj, v) forlorn, wretched, unhappy; (adj) mean, low, abject, deplorable, downcast, bad, desolate; (adj, adv) meager. ANTONYMS: (adj) happy, generous, cheerful, cheery, bright, fortunate, hopeful, jubilant, luxurious, overjoyed, heavenly
miserliness: (n) avarice, meanness, stinginess, greediness, greed, rapacity, cheeseparing, avidity, miser, niggardliness, parsimony. ANTONYM: (n) generosity
misery: (adj, n) grief; (n, v) distress; (n) affliction, agony, anguish, woe, hardship, evil, ill, infelicity, suffering. ANTONYMS: (n) joy, ecstasy, cheerfulness, fun, hopefulness, peace, contentment, pleasure, wealth, sport, cheer
misfortune: (n) accident, hardship, misadventure, disaster, calamity, mischance, catastrophe, mishap, bad luck, misery, affliction. ANTONYMS: (n) joy, bonus, opportunity, privilege, success, happiness
mishap: (n) adversity, misfortune, casualty, mischance, misery, calamity, misadventure, disaster, ill, bad luck, catastrophe
missis: (n) wife, missus, lady, mistress, matron, married woman
mist: (n, v) cloud; (v) blur, cover, obscure, befog, drizzle, bedim; (n) haze, vapor, brume; (adj) misty
mistaken: (adj) wrong, erroneous, false, misguided, inaccurate, fallacious, untrue, misleading, confused, improper, error. ANTONYMS: (adj) accurate, wise, right
mistress: (n) dame, concubine, madame, inamorata, lady, lover, fancy woman, doxy, girl, kept woman, missis
misunderstanding: (n) misapprehension, disagreement, misconception, misinterpretation, error, misconstruction, dispute, quarrel, mistaking; (n, v) dissension, difference. ANTONYMS: (n) harmony, fact, agreement, understanding
mitigated: (adj) eased, palliate, ease, relieved, disguised, cloaked
moan: (n, v) grumble, gripe, whine, lament, cry, howl; (v) bewail, complain, mourn; (n) complaint, lamentation. ANTONYMS: (v) compliment; (n) praise
moaning: (n, v) lamentation; (adj) groaning, whining, funereal, inarticulate, dirgeful; (n) complaining, mourning
mockery: (n) gibe, jeer, irony, farce, charade, derision, parody, mock, scorn, imitation, burlesque. ANTONYM: (n) approval
mocking: (adj) derisive, ironic, jeering, mock, quizzical, sarcastic, taunting, derisory, teasing, sardonic, sneering. ANTONYMS: (adj) respectful, approving, complimentary, sympathetic; (n) praise
moderate: (adj, v) temperate, calm; (adj) abstemious, mild, middling; (v) mitigate, lessen, allay, diminish, curb; (adv, v) check. ANTONYMS: (v) increase, intensify; (adj) immoderate, radical, unrestrained, speculative, strong, unreasonable, great, intemperate, massive
moderation: (n) abstinence, abstemiousness, moderateness, abatement, measure, alleviation, sobriety, patience, restraint, soberness, easing. ANTONYMS: (n) intemperance, overindulgence, excess, increase, immoderation, strength, extremism, indulgence, impatience, harshness, abandon
modest: (adj) humble, lowly, moderate, gentle, low, meek, chaste, decent, unassuming; (adj, n) bashful, diffident. ANTONYMS: (adj) pretentious, arrogant, spectacular, conceited, showy, proud, pompous, elaborate, grand, conspicuous, ostentatious
modesty: (n) reserve, bashfulness, humility, diffidence, humbleness, demureness, coyness, gentleness, continence; (adj, n) decency, honesty. ANTONYMS: (n) arrogance, immodesty, spectacle, flamboyance, abandon, bigheadedness, pretension, decadence, boldness
modified: (adj) limited, qualified, altered, adapted, mediocre, conditional, circumscribed, variant; (v) varied. ANTONYM: (adj) unmodified
moist: (adj) damp, wet, muggy, clammy, dank, damps, dampish, soggy, soppy, wettish, moisture. ANTONYMS: (adj) dry, limp, fresh
molly: (n) mollie
momentarily: (adv) transitorily, temporarily, momently, transiently, passingly, ephemerally, fugitively, provisionally, briefly, cursorily, in a moment. ANTONYM: (adv) slowly
momentary: (adj) brief, fugitive, transient, short, instantaneous, ephemeral, passing, momentaneous, temporary, impermanent, temporal. ANTONYMS: (adj) lasting, lengthy, long
monotonous: (adj) dull, flat, boring, dreary, tedious, insipid, monotone, monotonic; (adj, v) dry, uninteresting, stupid. ANTONYMS: (adj) exciting, varied, stimulating, lively, exotic, enthralling, brilliant, flexible
monotony: (n) boredom, dullness,

evenness, sameness, tediousness, flatness, dreariness, tautophony, tiresomeness; (adj) dull work, humdrum. ANTONYMS: (n) variety, variation

monthly: (adj) menstrual, mensal, periodic; (adv) each month, every month, month by month; (n) magazine, periodical, journal, series, review

monument: (n) headstone, cenotaph, tombstone, tablet, shrine, slab, gravestone, landmark, statue; (adj, n) column; (n, v) record

moon: (adj) lunar; (n) month, moonshine, satellite, moonlight, luck, lunar month, GHURRY, epoch, orb of night; (v) daydream

morbid: (adj) diseased, gruesome, macabre, corrupt, pathologic, unwholesome, peccant, sick, unhealthy, pathological; (adj, v) sickly

morrow: (n) morning, future, mean solar day, day

morsel: (n, v) bite, mouthful; (n) crumb, chew, particle, fragment, taste, piece, nibble; (adj, v) gobbet, mite

mortal: (adj) deadly, fatal, lethal, deathly, earthly; (n) man, individual, creature, person, human being, body. ANTONYMS: (adj, n) immortal; (adj) eternal, heavenly, mild, perfect, spiritual

motherless: (adj) unparented, parentless, udderless

motionless: (adj) inactive, inert, immobile, stationary, fixed, unmoving, quiescent, dead, torpid; (adj, adv) calm, at rest. ANTONYMS: (adj) mobile, active, alive, flowing

motive: (n, v) cause; (n) account, incentive, impulse, inducement, motif, motivation, incitement, reason, subject; (v) aim. ANTONYM: (n) disincentive

motto: (n) catchword, adage, epigraph, maxim, slogan, device, proverb, saw, saying, shibboleth, aphorism

mould: (n, v) mildew, cast, form, model; (v) make, frame, knead, fashion, forge; (n) molding, matrix

mouldy: (adj) moldy, mildewy, fusty, musty, stale, trite, hackneyed, well-worn, putrid, mould, frowsty

mourner: (n) sorrower, bearer, griever, unfortunate, pallbearer, wailer, weeper

mourning: (n) lament, lamentation, bereavement, gloom, woe, memorial, sorrowfulness, sadness, sorrow; (adj) grieving; (v) lamenting

mouse: (v) sneak, creep, steal, snoop, seek; (n) track, hunt, field mouse, fieldmouse, trace; (adj) small fry

muddy: (adj) turbid, filthy, boggy, cloudy, dark, unclean, dingy, grimy, miry; (adj, v) foul, sloppy. ANTONYMS: (adj) clean, dry; (v) clarify, cleanse

multiplication: (n) augmentation, increase, generation, expansion, rise, doubling, propagation, increment, reproduction; (n, v) addition; (adj) pullulation. ANTONYM: (n) decrease

multitude: (n) flock, horde, crowd, host, throng, concourse, mob, masses, mass, herd, swarm. ANTONYM: (n) trickle

multitudinous: (adj) innumerable, infinite, manifold, multiple, numberless, myriad, many, numerous, thick, populous, innumerous

mural: (n) wall painting, painting

murmur: (n, v) grumble, mumble, hum, whisper, mutter, whine, babble, drone; (v) complain, bubble, breathe

murmuring: (n) murmuration, murmur, complaint, grumble, muttering, mutter, murmur vowel; (adj) whispering, humming, droning, murmurous

muscles: (n) sinew, strength

muscular: (adj) athletic, strong, brawny, hefty, burly, powerful, robust, husky, stout, stalwart, sturdy. ANTONYMS: (adj) puny, slight, weak, ectomorphic, endomorphic, skinny, unfit, feeble, frail, delicate

musingly: (adv) thoughtfully, ponderingly, meditatively, contemplatively, reflectively, ruminatively, broodingly, deep in thought. ANTONYM: (adv) unthinkingly

muslin: (v) linen, cloth; (n) mousseline, organdy, cambric, crash, fabric, nainsook, organdie

mute: (adj) dumb, silent, inarticulate, dummy, tongueless; (v) muffle, dampen, deaden, hush; (adj, v) quiet, dull. ANTONYMS: (adj) talkative, speaking, spoken; (v) amplify

mutely: (adv) dumbly, wordlessly, stilly, speechlessly, taciturnly, unspokenly, quietly, noiselessly, dully, soundlessly, dummily. ANTONYM: (adv) noisily

muttered: (adj) garbled, incoherent, broken, inarticulate

muttering: (n) grumbling, mutter, murmuring, grumble, murmuration, murmur vowel, complaint, heart murmur, cardiac murmur; (adj) mumbling, faint

mutual: (adj) common, communal, joint, bilateral, collective, public, united, concerted, shared, alternate; (adv) mutually. ANTONYMS: (adj) individual, unilateral, private, solitary

mysterious: (adj) inscrutable, incomprehensible, deep, eerie, inexplicable, obscure, abstruse, dark, cryptic, secret, arcane. ANTONYMS: (adj) known, apparent, normal, open, explicable, facile, obvious, simple, legible, familiar, transparent

mysteriously: (adv) enigmatically, strangely, obscurely, secretly, uncannily, mystically, darkly, puzzlingly, weirdly, abstrusely, occultly. ANTONYM: (adv) normally

mystery: (n) arcanum, enigma, mysteriousness, secrecy, puzzle, craft, perplexity, poser, inscrutability, whodunit; (adj, n) secret. ANTONYMS: (n) explanation, openness

nailed: (adj) fixed, tight, stationary, stable, secure, decided, firm, immobile

naked: (adj, v) bare; (adj) nude, exposed, open, barren, raw, bleak, unclothed, defenseless, au naturel, defenceless. ANTONYMS: (adj) covered, concealed, hidden, dressed

named: (adj, v) called; (adj) nominative, nominal, chosen, appointed, nominated, designated, titled, specified; (v) benempt, ycleped

nancy: (n) Nanchang

narrated: (adj) oral, narrative

narration: (n) description, recital, narrative, explanation, history, tale, report, relation, story, recitation, rehearsal

narrative: (n, v) history, tale; (n) account, story, chronicle, legend, yarn, recital, relation, report, anecdote

narrowing: (n) contraction, tightening, coarctation, stricture, angustation; (adj) dwindling, tapering, constrictive, constricting, binding; (adj, n) tapering off.

ANTONYM: (n) expansion

narrowly: (adv) closely, barely, hardly, strictly, slenderly, tightly, smally, contractly, slimly, precisely, nearly. ANTONYMS: (adv) broadly, inaccurately

nasty: (adj) dirty, foul, filthy, disgusting, awful, mean, repulsive, raw, hurtful, coarse; (adj, n) obnoxious. ANTONYMS: (adj) agreeable, pleasant, nice, charitable, lovely, delightful, friendly, tasty, charming, safe, respectful

native: (adj, n) aboriginal, natural; (adj) inherent, inborn, innate, congenital, inbred, indigenous, domestic; (n) autochthon, aborigine. ANTONYMS: (n) stranger, migrant, foreigner; (adj) foreign, learned, acquired, nonnative, overseas, adopted; (adj, n) immigrant, imported

nattiness: (n) jauntiness, chic, smartness, rakishness, modishness, chicness, breeziness

naughty: (adj) mischievous, impish, blue, improper, disobedient, insubordinate, wicked, evil, lewd, dark, unruly. ANTONYMS: (adj) decent, behaved, obedient, clean

nearer: (adj) adjacent, narre, hither; (adv) more rapidly, sooner, quicker, nigher, NER, faster, earlier, Neer

nearest: (adj) proximate, immediate, close, near, next, adjoining, intimate, direct, adjacent; (adj, adv) nighest; (adv) fore. ANTONYM: (adj) distant

nearness: (n) closeness, contiguity, vicinity, familiarity, adjacency, proximity, propinquity, presence, immediacy, neighborhood, nearby. ANTONYMS: (n) distance, farness, remoteness

neat: (adj) elegant, tidy, clear, natty, graceful, dainty, pretty, clever, pure, straight, nifty. ANTONYMS: (adj) messy, scruffy, unkempt, clumsy, disordered, disorderly, diluted, large, lax, impulsive, loose

neatly: (adv) sprucely, tidily, cleanly, adroitly, precisely, smartly, tastefully, gracefully, properly, nattily; (adj, adv) dexterously. ANTONYMS: (adv) messily, shabbily, untidily, clumsily, loosely, inelegantly, awkwardly

neatness: (n) trimness, dexterity, orderliness, tidiness, spruceness, cleanliness, precision, compactness, purity, cleanness, elegance. ANTONYMS: (n) untidiness, largeness, clumsiness, disorder, inelegance, clutter, chaos, messiness

necessaries: (n) necessary, necessaries of life, necessity, must

necessity: (n) demand, need, lack, exigency, essential, compulsion, emergency, distress, must, constraint, necessary. ANTONYMS: (n) inessential, treat, unimportance, luxury

neckcloth: (n) neckerchief, scarf, handkerchief, gunstock, broth, caudex, descent, farm animal, breed, gillyflower, inventory

necklace: (n) collar, chain, chaplet, bracelet, necklet, string, corona, neckband, jewelry, coronet, crown

needful: (adj) necessary, essential, indispensable, required, needed, mandatory, exigent, needy; (adj, v) requisite; (n) necessity, almighty dollar

needing: (adj) lacking, short

needless: (adj, v) unnecessary, superfluous; (adj) futile, dispensable, bootless, excessive, preventable, meaningless, pointless, wanton, unavailing. ANTONYMS: (adj) essential, worthwhile, inevitable, justifiable

neglect: (n, v) disregard, slight, default; (v) ignore, fail, overlook, miss, forget, drop; (n) carelessness, omission. ANTONYMS: (n) development, surveillance, caution, affection, cherish; (v) do, protect, complete, remember, heed; (n, v) care

neglected: (adj) dilapidated, disregarded, ignored, deserted, derelict, forsaken, obsolete, antiquated, antique, shabby, unnoticed. ANTONYM: (adj) salubrious

neighbour: (adj) neighboring, neighbouring, neighborly, adjacent, contiguous; (v) abut, populate, adjoin, butt on, butt against; (n) neighbourhood

neighbourhood: (n) neighborhood, adjacency, locality, near, nearness, proximity, place, community, street, vicinity, nearby

neighbourhoods: (n) neighbourhood

neighbouring: (adj) adjoining, contiguous, vicinal, abutting; (v) adjoin

neighbourly: (adj) amicable, friendly, gracious, obliging, attentive, benign, courteous, complaisant, helpful; (adv) neighboringly

nerves: (n) nervousness, jitters, jumpiness, jitteriness, restlessness, tension, strain, screaming meemies, apprehension, edginess, extreme nervousness. ANTONYM: (n) calm

nest: (n) den, lair, hole, burrow, home, beehive; (adj) brood, hive, litter; (adj, n) herd; (v) embed

nestled: (adj) closer, close

nether: (adj) lower, inferior, down, low, chthonic, chthonian, infernal, subjacent, less, lesser; (adj, adv) under

neutral: (adj) indifferent, impartial, impersonal, dispassionate, noncommittal, inert, colorless, unbiased, fair, objective; (adj, n) neuter. ANTONYMS: (adj) colorful, aromatic, partisan, positive, negative, bright, proactive, vivid, subjective, strong, partial

neutrality: (n) indifference, detachment, independence, fairness, objectivity, disinterest, neutral, ph, nonparticipation, tolerance, disinterestedness. ANTONYM: (n) subjectivity

neutralize: (v) counterbalance, countervail, neutralise, nullify, offset, cancel, undo, annul, negative, antagonize, kill. ANTONYMS: (v) aggravate, arm, contaminate

niece: (n) grandniece, aunt, brother's daughter, uncle, kinswoman

nightmare: (n) incubus, fantasy, terror, trial, air drawn dagger, bugbear, fancy, vision, fear, horror, situation. ANTONYM: (n) reality

nimble: (adj) lively, adroit, agile, brisk, spry, alert, expeditious, energetic, clever, lithe; (adj, v) light. ANTONYMS: (adj) clumsy, heavy, stiff, slow, awkward, sluggish, unfit

nimbleness: (n) lightness, dexterity, alertness, adroitness, legerity, deftness, quickness, lightsomeness, haste, legerdemain, grace. ANTONYMS: (n) clumsiness, heaviness, awkwardness

nodding: (adj) cernuous, drooping, dozy, dozing, somnolent, drugged, pendulous, drowsing, droopy, annuent, flagging. ANTONYM: (adj) awake

noisily: (adv) clamorously, boisterously, vociferously, riotously, raucously, uproariously, loudly, blatantly, rowdily, stridently, vocally. ANTONYMS: (adv) noiselessly, silently, calmly, peacefully, softly

noisy: (adj) boisterous, loud, vociferous, clamorous, turbulent, tumultuous, strident, blatant, shrill,

rowdy, vocal. ANTONYMS: (adj) silent, peaceful, tranquil, calm, noiseless, soft, restrained, placid, orderly, gentle

nonsense: (n) bosh, absurdity, humbug, balderdash, foolishness, drivel, folderol, baloney, falderal, jargon, claptrap. ANTONYMS: (n) sense, wisdom, substance, fact

notable: (adj) conspicuous, celebrated, illustrious, eminent, memorable, extraordinary, renowned, famous, remarkable; (n) luminary, celebrity. ANTONYMS: (adj) ordinary, unknown, obscure, unimpressive, undistinguished; (n) nobody, nonentity

noticing: (n) observation, look; (adj) conscious

notions: (n) belief, thinking, thought, sundries, opinion, concept, ideas, ribbon, philosophy, odds and ends; (adj) irrational

notwithstanding: (adv, conj) nevertheless, although, even though, yet, but; (conj) albeit; (adv) nonetheless, though, still, all the same; (prep) despite

nourished: (adj) fostered

novelty: (adj) news; (n) freshness, mutation, newness, trinket, curiosity, originality, oddity, bauble; (n, v) change, difference

nowadays: (adv) currently, presently, at present, at the moment, immediately; (adv, n) today; (adj, n) present; (n) moment, modern times, these days, nonce. ANTONYMS: (adv) formerly, then

noways: (n) nowise

nowhere: (n) obscurity, limbo; (adv) not anywhere, nowhither, without, not anywhither; (adj) tiresome, vapid, uninteresting, tasteless, prosaic

nowise: (adv) no, nay, noways, not, none, to no degree

nursery: (n) greenhouse, cradle, nursery school, hothouse, seminary, seedbed, nest, day nursery, creche, hotbed, glasshouse

nursling: (n) baby, babe, infant, suckling, child, sucker, toddler, lactation

nurture: (v) foster, cherish, bring up, grow, nourish, care, maintain, educate, nurse; (n) education, breeding. ANTONYMS: (n, v) neglect

nurturing: (n) fostering, upbringing, bringing up, fosterage, development, acculturation; (adj) cultural, motherly

nutty: (adj) daft, wacky, balmy, nuts, loopy, crackers, cracked, loony, mad, batty, barmy. ANTONYMS: (adj) sane, sensible

oaken: (adj) woody

oates: (n) Titus Oates

oats: (n) Avena, grain, millet, cereal, cereal grass, common oats, genus Avena, Haver, holder, maize, buckwheat

obedience: (n) meekness, submission, deference, obeisance, acquiescence, subordination, bow, observance, docility, loyalty, allegiance. ANTONYMS: (n) disobedience, defiance, naughtiness, resistance, divergence, chaos, wildness

obey: (v) comply, listen, keep, fulfill, hear, conform, abide by, serve, comply with; (n, v) mind, heed. ANTONYMS: (v) disobey, defy, break, transgress, infringe, challenge, deny

obeying: (adv) under

objection: (n) dissent, complaint, grievance, exception, gripe, disagreement, outcry, difficulty, expostulation, disapproval, criticism. ANTONYMS: (n) approval, agreement, praise, acceptance

obligation: (n) debt, bond, duty, liability, commitment, charge, burden, responsibility, onus, necessity, requirement. ANTONYMS: (n) option, persuasion

oblige: (v) coerce, force, drive, constrain, make, bind, accommodate, obligate, necessitate, enforce, impel. ANTONYMS: (v) displease, request, hinder

obliged: (adj) grateful, thankful, appreciative, forced, accountable, compelled; (adj, v) bound, under obligation; (adj, prep) indebted; (v) oblige, binding. ANTONYM: (adj) ungrateful

obliging: (adj, v) complaisant, courteous; (adj) amiable, affable, gentle, kind, good, benign, pleasant, gracious, compliant. ANTONYMS: (adj) uncooperative, unkind, contrary, reticent

oblivion: (n) limbo, Lethe, void, absolution, forgiveness, obliviousness, silence, remission, pardon; (n, v) amnesty; (adj) nonbeing. ANTONYMS: (n) consciousness, fame

oblivious: (adj) careless, inattentive, mindless, heedless, neglectful, unaware, ignorant, unwitting, Lethean, deaf, blind. ANTONYMS: (adj) aware, watchful, mindful, careful, sharp

obscure: (adj, n) cloudy, dark; (adj) gloomy, mysterious, incomprehensible, hidden, ambiguous, concealed; (adj, v) darken, muddy; (v) hide. ANTONYMS: (adj) clear, noticeable, simple, obvious, distinct, mainstream, famous, definite, overt, plain; (v) reveal

observable: (adj, adv) noticeable, perceptible; (adj) discernible, apparent, appreciable, visible, evident, noteworthy, notable, detectable, remarkable. ANTONYMS: (adj) hidden, imperceptible, invisible

observantly: (adv) attentively, observingly, vigilantly, alertly, regardfully, cautiously, carefully, mindfully, heedfully, sharply, quickly

observations: (n) commentary, remarks, explanation, comments

observing: (adj) observant, mindful, watchful, commemorative, conscious, observative, perceptive, thoughtful; (n) investigation

obstacle: (n, v) hindrance, difficulty, block, check, interruption, delay; (n) drawback, barrier, hitch, obstruction, bar. ANTONYMS: (n) asset, aid, advantage, boost, incentive

obstinacy: (n) stubbornness, firmness, bullheadedness, determination, contumacy, mulishness, impenitence, resolve, resoluteness, impenitency, pertinacity. ANTONYMS: (n) cooperation, compliance

obstinately: (adv) obdurately, mulishly, persistently, perversely, doggedly, refractorily, unyieldingly, willfully, pigheadedly, waywardly, firmly. ANTONYM: (adv) helpfully

obstruction: (n, v) hindrance, impediment, interruption, check, difficulty; (n) bar, hitch, blockage, blockade, block, hurdle. ANTONYMS: (n) success, boost, help

occasional: (adj) accidental, irregular, incidental, infrequent, episodic, intermittent, fortuitous, adventitious, contingent, rare, odd. ANTONYMS: (adj) frequent, recurrent, addicted, regular, common, continuous

occult: (adj) hidden, obscure, mysterious, cryptic, cryptical, dark, esoteric, magical, unseen, confidential; (adj, n, v) secret
occupation: (n) occupancy, business, craft, calling, job, place, vocation, career, function, line; (n, v) affair. ANTONYM: (n) surrender
occupied: (adj) busy, engaged, employed, diligent, active, absorbed, engrossed, working, industrious, affianced, betrothed. ANTONYMS: (adj) empty, vacant, uninhabited, available, free, idle, liberated, unoccupied
occurring: (adj) going on
odious: (adj, v) hateful, obnoxious; (adj) detestable, hideous, nasty, execrable, disgusting, abhorrent, abominable, heinous, forbidding. ANTONYMS: (adj) pleasant, delightful, agreeable, lovable, nice
odorous: (adj) fragrant, odoriferous, aromatic, balmy, scented, sweet, redolent, perfumed, odorant, malodorous, fragrance. ANTONYM: (adj) smelly
odour: (n) flavour, smell, odor, aroma, scent, bouquet, savour, nose, flavor, smack, redolence
offal: (n) litter, waste, junk, leavings, trash, refuse, rubbish, dross, residue, organs, debris
offend: (v) irritate, affront, insult, contravene, injure, disgust, infringe, displease, abuse, wound, anger. ANTONYMS: (v) please, delight, praise, attract
offended: (adj) angry, affronted, aggrieved, pained, wronged, annoyed, insulted, shocked, vexed, resentful, injured. ANTONYMS: (adj) indifferent, proud, unconcerned
officially: (adv) properly, stately, authoritatively, legally, ex officio, legitimately, lawfully, regularly, Standardly, strictly, precisely. ANTONYMS: (adv) illegally, informally, unlawfully
ogre: (n) fiend, giant, demon, devil, brute, bloodsucker, specter, vulture; (adj) Gorgon, nightmare, mormo
oldest: (n) elder, doyen; (adj) older
old-fashioned: (adj) obsolete, antiquated, archaic, outmoded, outdated, ancient, old, musty, corny, behind the times, superannuated
onward: (adv) ahead, forwards, before, forth, onwards, along, in advance, frontward, forrader; (adv, prep) on; (adj) progressive. ANTONYM: (adv) backward
open-eyed: (adj) watchful
opium: (v) poppy, balm, anodyne, milk, rose water; (adj) anaesthetic agent; (n) tobacco, hashish, ether, Opie, cocaine
oppose: (v) contest, contend, resist, contradict, controvert, contravene, counteract, fight, counter, disagree, dissent. ANTONYMS: (v) advocate, agree, back, advise, promote, accept, submit, encourage, correspond, approve, favor
opposed: (adj) conflicting, hostile, contrary, antagonistic, adverse, contrasted, repugnant, averse, irreconcilable, incompatible; (adj, v) opposing. ANTONYMS: (adj) sympathetic, compatible, unopposed, similar, favorable, eager, agreeable, inclined, friendly
oracular: (adj) prophetic, ambiguous, mystic, cryptic, prophetical, sibylline, mysterious, delphic, obscure, opinionated, dogmatic
orchard: (n) park, garden, plantation, arboretum, avenue, pinetum, shrubbery, woodlet, parterre, pinery, copse
ordering: (n) disposition, sequence, order, disposal, grading, adjustment, management, decree, configuration, classification; (adj) imperative
orderliness: (n) system, tidiness, arrangement, trimness, neatness, method, methodicalness, status, discipline, kilter, regularity. ANTONYMS: (n) disorderliness, rowdiness, chaos, messiness
orderly: (adj) neat, tidy, exact, regular, ordered, systematic, logical, coherent, businesslike; (adv) systematically; (n) attendant. ANTONYMS: (adj) unmanageable, rowdy, wild, disorganized, untidy, disorderly, confused, lawless, messy, defiant, haphazard
organism: (n) being, living thing, constitution, creature, animal, life, person, hybrid, haploid, mascot, mutation
originality: (n) novelty, imagination, ingenuity, initiative, freshness, newness, invention, creativity, heterodoxy, innovation; (adj, n) individuality. ANTONYMS: (n) normality, unoriginality
ornamental: (adj) fancy, florid, cosmetic, extravagant, elaborate, showy, enhancing, delicate, beautifying; (n) decoration, adornment. ANTONYMS: (adj) plain, unadorned
ornamented: (adj) embellished, beautified, fancy, flowery, ornate, adorned, bedecked, decked, festooned, feathered, florid
ornaments: (n) stuff, trim, ornamentation, equipments, dress, disposition, custom, curios, condition, clothing, gaudery
orphan: (n) waif, caterpillar, nymph, nympha, cocoon, Aurelia, tyke, staddle, youngster, shaver; (adj) orphaned
orts: (n) candle ends, odds and ends, heeltap, debris, detritus; (adj) trash, scourings, rubble, sweepings, refuse, waste
ostler: (n) groom, stableboy, stableman, hostleress, jockey, tiger, swineherd, herdsman, hired hand, hired man, gillie
outburst: (n) explosion, spurt, eruption, fit, burst, flash, effusion, gush, ebullition, blast, rage
outdoor: (adj) outside, outdoors, out, outward, outlying, outer, external, overseas, abroad, out of doors, without. ANTONYMS: (adj) inside, interior, internal
outermost: (adj, adv) farthest; (adj) outmost, extreme, utmost, uttermost, last, outer, outside, external, exterior, furthermost
outlast: (v) outlive, endure, outstay, outwear, live through, remain, hold out, come through, continue, live on, go
outlay: (n) expenditure, expense, disbursement, charge, outgo, spending, fee, expenses, defrayment, payment; (v) expend
outline: (adj, n, v) draft; (n, v) line, form, design, edge, abstract; (n) synopsis, contour, digest, figure; (v) draw. ANTONYMS: (n) exposition, light
outlook: (n) aspect, hope, expectancy, view, angle, attitude; (n, v) expectation, lookout, prospect, anticipation, landscape. ANTONYMS: (n) past, rear
outlying: (adj) faraway, remote, far, outer, isolated, outdoor, outward, exterior, peripheral, outstanding, secluded. ANTONYMS: (adj) central, metropolitan, nearby, neighboring
out-of-the-way: (adj) strange, singular, remote, devious, secluded, outlying, distant, obscure, unusual, peculiar, far

outpouring: (n) outpour, effusion, flow, outflow, gush, jet, barrage, leakage, outburst, effluence, overflow
outskirts: (n) edge, periphery, margin, environs, border, fringe, boundary, rim, skirt, precincts, frontier. ANTONYM: (n) middle
outstretched: (adj) extended, lengthy, flat, open, unfolded, stretched, broad, wiredrawn, wide, long
outward: (adj) external, apparent, extrinsic, outer, superficial, surface, outside, ostensible, foreign, outdoor; (adv) out. ANTONYMS: (adj, adv) inward; (adj) inner, internal, deep
outwork: (v) advance work, horn work; (n) bulwark, frontier, defence, homework, defense, defensive structure
oval: (adj) elliptical, elliptic, ovate, oviform, ovoid, oblong, egg-shaped, rounded, prolate, round; (n) ovule
oven: (n) furnace, stove, fireplace, hearth, broiler, heater, bakery, range, kitchen appliance, boiler, coke oven chamber
overarched: (adj) arching over, fornicated
overcoat: (n) greatcoat, coat, cloak, robe, topcoat, surcoat, coating, overcoating, capote, chesterfield, gown
overgrown: (adj) excessive, exorbitant, inordinate, extravagant, monstrous, covered, exaggerated, dropsical, lush; (v) turgid, tumid
overpowering: (adj) overwhelming, oppressive, resistless, compelling, intense, heavy, strong, onerous, devastating, uncontrollable, depressing. ANTONYMS: (adj) light, subtle, imperceptible, insignificant, shallow, weak, faint, bland
overtake: (v) catch, attain, catch up with, exceed, overpower, overcome, go by, gain, devastate, outstrip, beat
overwise: (adj) pretentious, pragmatical
owing: (adj) due, unpaid, unsettled, outstanding, overdue, owed, payable, undischarged, indebted, fulfilling obligation, lawful. ANTONYM: (adj) settled
owned: (v) owed, ought; (adj) own, proprietary; (n) aught
owning: (n) admission, avowal, confession, courteous recognition, acknowledgment
pacify: (adj, n, v) calm, allay, compose, appease; (adj, v) mollify, lull, soothe; (n, v) ease; (v) conciliate, placate, moderate. ANTONYMS: (v) annoy, enrage, excite, infuriate, aggravate, displease, inflame, provoke
pacing: (n) accelerando, andante, allegro, allegretto, pace, walk, tempo, musical time, maneuvering alongside another vessel, cardiac pacing
packed: (adj) full, compact, filled, jammed, overcrowded, crammed, dense, thick, congested, teeming, cramped. ANTONYMS: (adj) deserted, loose, open
pained: (adj) offended, aggrieved, distressed, displeased, sore, grieved, miserable, injured, wounded, worried, upset. ANTONYM: (adj) unaffected
painful: (adj) hard, difficult, sharp, harrowing, grievous, afflictive, bad, irritating; (adj, v) distressing, harsh, bitter. ANTONYMS: (adj) content, heartwarming, soothing, comfortable, bearable, agreeable, effortless, dull, slight, wonderful, happy
painfully: (adv) sorely, grievously, distressingly, severely, tenderly, badly, agonizingly, laboriously, sadly, bitterly, poignantly. ANTONYMS: (adv) easily, tolerably
pains: (n) nisus, labor, trouble, effort, exertion, labour, pain, care, struggle, attempt, strain
painter: (n) artist, colorist, landscapist, impressionist, miniaturist, dauber, halser, Felis concolor, guy, cable, hawser
pallid: (adj) ghastly, wan, bloodless, lurid, cadaverous, sickly, ashen, white, pasty, livid, watery. ANTONYMS: (adj) healthy, rosy, vivid
palm: (n) medal, decoration, prize, palm tree, victory, thenar, laurel wreath; (v) filch, cabbage, rob; (adj) totipalmate
paltry: (adj, n) mean; (adj) contemptible, measly, trifling, abject, insignificant, inconsiderable, puny, little, trivial, low. ANTONYMS: (adj) generous, substantial, plentiful, enormous, important, profound
paradise: (n) Elysium, bliss, Eden, Zion, promised land, Garden of Eden, Elysian Fields, ecstasy, nirvana, Valhalla, utopia. ANTONYM: (n) misery
parental: (adj) paternal, motherly, parent, enatic, enate, agnatic, agnate. ANTONYM: (adj) filial
parishioners: (n) people attending worship, worshippers
parlour: (n) living room, parlor, sitting room, front room, livingroom, room to meet guests, parlours, parlors, salon, reception room, room
parson: (n) cleric, clergyman, rector, pastor, curate, preacher, ecclesiastic, divine, priest, vicar, father
parted: (adj) divided, separate, distributed, separated, divisible, disunited, compounder, compound, dividable
partially: (adv) incompletely, in part, unfairly, part, halfway, sectionally, imperfectly, unjustly, prejudicedly, discriminatorily; (adj, adv) half. ANTONYMS: (adv) wholly, totally, wholeheartedly, mainly, fairly; (adj) fully
parting: (n) adieu, division, leave, departure, disunion, goodbye, leaving, segregation, dying, rupture; (adj) valedictory. ANTONYMS: (n) joining, meeting, connection, Reunion
passion: (n) affection, fire, fervor, love, feeling, anger, enthusiasm, heat, craving, desire; (n, v) ardor. ANTONYMS: (n) apathy, hate, serenity, meekness, hatred, doubt, dislike, calmness, moderation
passionate: (adj, v) ardent, impetuous; (adj) hot, excited, burning, angry, fervent, fierce, animated, earnest; (adj, adv) fiery. ANTONYMS: (adj) indifferent, mild, passionless, unenthusiastic, cold, calm, halfhearted, cool, lukewarm, weak, uninterested
passionately: (adv) fervently, vehemently, violently, fiercely, eagerly, zealously, fervidly, fierily, enthusiastically, heatedly, stormily. ANTONYMS: (adv) mildly, apathetically, calmly, halfheartedly, impassively, jokingly, gently
passive: (adj) apathetic, inert, submissive, indifferent, lifeless, nonviolent, resigned, dormant, slow, unresisting, impassive. ANTONYMS: (adj) active, working, spirited, assertive, violent, wild, practical, proactive
pasture: (v) graze, browse, crop; (n) grass, grazing land, pasturage, field, ley, lea; (n, v) feed, forage
patched: (adj) mean, besmirched, old, damaged, ragged, flyblown
paternal: (adj) parental, agnate,

maternal, agnatic, concerned, solicitous, patrimonial, ancestral, fatherlike, racial, fraternal. ANTONYMS: (adj) filial, motherly

pathetic: (adj) deplorable, miserable, pitiful, wretched, forlorn, lamentable, tragic, distressing; (adj, v) touching, affecting, sad. ANTONYMS: (adj) strong, comical, effective, impressive, admirable, spirited, praiseworthy, generous, fine, brilliant, decisive

pathos: (v) emotion, inspiration, impression, affection; (n) poignancy, pity, ruth, commiseration, grief, poignance, sympathy

pathway: (n) lane, road, path, footpath, course, trail, alley, highway, way, tract, track

patience: (n) endurance, fortitude, longanimity, equanimity, tolerance, resignation, restraint, composure, sufferance; (n, v) moderation, calmness. ANTONYMS: (n) impatience, eagerness, intolerance, annoyance

patiently: (adv) perseveringly, invalidly, quietly, uncomplainingly, persistently, forbearingly, resignedly, steadily, doggedly, calmly, meekly. ANTONYM: (adv) eagerly

patronage: (n) condescension, aegis, clientele, favor, trade, backing, assistance, countenance, auspices, aid, championship

patronizing: (adj) condescending, haughty, patronising, superior, arrogant, snobbish, arch, supercilious; (v) patronize; (n) patronage; (adv) patronizingly. ANTONYMS: (adj) humble, deferential, modest

pauper: (n) poor man, mumper, bum, poor person, starveling; (adj) poor, indigent, penniless; (v) bust, fold

pause: (n, v) halt, interruption, adjournment, delay, respite, stop; (adj, n, v) rest; (n) intermission, gap; (adj, v) discontinue; (v) hesitate. ANTONYMS: (n) decisiveness, continuation, start; (v) proceed

peal: (n) ding, noise, clang, dingdong, blast; (v) chime, knell, toll, echo; (adj, n) swell; (n, v) bang

peasantry: (n) farmers

pebbles: (n) shingle, grit, gravel, stones

peculiar: (adj) particular, odd, exceptional, different, extraordinary, curious, eccentric, characteristic, anomalous, abnormal, distinctive. ANTONYMS: (adj) normal, typical, common, universal, explicable, conventional

peculiarly: (adj, adv) particularly, curiously, unusually, uncommonly, singularly; (adv) especially, oddly, strangely, specifically, weirdly, specially. ANTONYMS: (adv) typically, ordinarily, slightly

pedestrian: (adj) humdrum, ordinary, earthbound, banal, trite, tedious, hackneyed, prosaic, dull; (n) walker, footer. ANTONYMS: (adj) exciting, inspired, excellent, exceptional, inspiring, original; (n) driver

pedlar: (n) chapman, hawker, huckster, packman, cadger, seller, coster, costermonger, vender, vendor, street vendor

peep: (n, v) glance, peek, look, gaze, glint, squeal; (n) glimpse, cheep; (v) chirp, peer, pry. ANTONYMS: (v) stare, gaze; (n) examination

peeping: (n) cheeping, tweeting, chirping; (adj) inquisitive

peering: (adj) nosy, prying, snoopy

peevish: (adj) fretful, fractious, morose, testy, irascible, moody, captious, petulant, cross, cantankerous, touchy

penal: (adj, n) punitive, corrective; (adj) punishable, castigatory, punitory, illegal, disciplinary, penalizing

penetrating: (adj) astute, sharp, cutting, discerning, incisive, piercing, perceptive, discriminating, trenchant; (adj, v) biting, acute. ANTONYMS: (adj) mild, soft, mellow, low, gentle, dull, dense

penetration: (n, v) intelligence, discernment, discrimination, judgment; (adj, n) acumen; (n) incursion, acuteness, entrance, interpenetration, invasion, breakthrough. ANTONYM: (n) foolishness

penitence: (n) penance, compunction, regret, contrition, remorse, rue, sorrow, atonement, grief, expiation, contriteness

penny: (n) change, coin, centime, copper, groat, subunit, money, mite, doit, small change, denomination

pepper: (n) cayenne, capsicum, paprika, pimento, peppercorn, black pepper; (v) bombard, sprinkle; (adj) spice, season, salt

perceive: (v) comprehend, apprehend, discover, see, grasp, find, know, observe, sense, appreciate; (adj, v) discern. ANTONYMS: (v) Miss, observe, ignore

perceived: (adj) sensed, apparent, supposed, professed, ostensible

perception: (n) conception, notion, idea, impression, feeling, discernment, insight, comprehension, taste, sensation, penetration. ANTONYMS: (n) unconsciousness, foolishness, dullness, clumsiness

peremptory: (adj) imperious, commanding, dictatorial, overbearing, decisive, magisterial; (adj, v) authoritative, dogmatic, flat, absolute; (v) decided. ANTONYM: (adj) polite

perfection: (n) maturity, ideal, consummation, paragon, completeness, finish, completion, crown, flawlessness, development, ne plus ultra. ANTONYMS: (n) imperfection, fault, abandonment, ugliness, deterioration

performer: (n) musician, doer, artiste, comedian, player, conjurer, juggler, magician, executant, thespian, agent

permit: (adj, n, v) give, allow, consent; (adj, v) grant; (n, v) license, leave; (v) admit, let, bear; (n) licence, permission. ANTONYMS: (n, v) ban; (v) prevent, prohibit, stop, refuse, veto, outlaw, disagree, debar, bar; (n) prohibition

perpendicular: (adj) upright, vertical, steep, plumb, straight, right, sheer, orthogonal, normal, precipitous, true. ANTONYMS: (adj) horizontal, parallel, inclined, oblique, prone, gentle

perpetual: (adj) incessant, continual, constant, endless, eternal, everlasting, lasting, ceaseless, immortal, continuous, perennial. ANTONYMS: (adj) temporary, intermittent, transitory, mortal, unstable, finite, inconstant, occasional, sporadic

perpetually: (adv) eternally, everlastingly, always, incessantly, continually, endlessly, permanently, unceasingly, ceaselessly, ever; (adj, adv) forever. ANTONYMS: (adv) erratically, sporadically

perplexity: (n) confusion, dilemma, bewilderment, maze, labyrinth, embarrassment, quandary, complication, enigma; (adj, n) difficulty, distress. ANTONYM: (n) understanding

persecution: (adj, n) annoyance; (n) harassment, torture, maltreatment,

subjugation, hurt, nuisance, cruelty; (adj) molestation, intolerance, abuse
personage: (n) person, notable, celebrity, personality, individual, bigwig, figure, somebody, human, character, being
persuade: (v) convince, coax, assure, allure, entice, influence, induce, cajole, argue, exhort, lure. ANTONYMS: (v) discourage, dissuade, deter, restrain, force
persuaded: (adj) sure, satisfied, easily affected, impressible, positive, delicate, sensible, intelligent, certain, in no doubt, definite. ANTONYMS: (adj) unsure, uncertain
persuasion: (n) belief, opinion, faith, inducement, creed, idea, exhortation, enticement, view, sentiment; (adj, n) conviction. ANTONYMS: (n) force, punishment, dissuasion
persuasive: (adj) convincing, forcible, eloquent, forceful, cogent, strong, suasive, compelling, influential, effective, potent. ANTONYMS: (adj) unconvincing, halfhearted, hesitant, dissuasive, unpersuasive, repellent, inarticulate
perturbed: (adj) disturbed, agitated, hot and bothered, confused, uneasy, concerned, worried, unsettled, troubled, upset, distraught. ANTONYMS: (adj) untroubled, relaxed
petition: (n, v) appeal, request, desire, claim; (v) ask, beg, crave, apply; (n) application, entreaty, invocation
pettishly: (adv) testily, irritably, crossly, tetchily, peevishly, techily, huffily, touchily, fractiously, fretfully, moodily
petty: (adj) insignificant, trivial, little, frivolous, paltry, puny, negligible, light, mean, minute, exiguous. ANTONYMS: (adj) important, serious, generous, profound, significant, expansive, crucial, considerable, broadminded, enormous
phantasm: (n) apparition, ghost, illusion, phantom, spirit, vision, delusion, hallucination, eidolon, specter, fancy
phenomenon: (n) appearance, marvel, miracle, incident, wonder, prodigy, phenomena, development, occurrence, happening, apparition
phial: (n) ampoule, bottle, cruet, ampul, ampule, noggin, caster, flask, stoup
philosophic: (v) platonic, staid, stayed, stoical; (adj) thoughtful, rational, patient, learned, ideologic, ideological. ANTONYM: (adj) nonphilosophical
phraseology: (n) language, expression, phrasing, wording, idiom, vernacular, dialect, choice of words, terminology, locution; (n, v) style
physic: (n) medicine, aperient, cathartic, medication, healing, medicament, drug; (n, v) cure, doctor, remedy; (v) heal
pierced: (adj) punctured, perforate, penetrated, cut, cleft
piety: (n) godliness, devoutness, faith, righteousness, holiness, reverence, religion, religiousness, piousness, sanctity, goodness. ANTONYMS: (n) sin, profanity, wickedness
pig-headed: (adj) stubborn, obstinate, opinionated, obdurate, perverse, willful, dogged, contumacious, intractable
pigs: (n) stock, hogs, Suidae, livestock, litter, family Suidae, domestic animals, cattle, boars, sheep, farm animals
pigtail: (v) braid, tail, flap, skirt, train; (n) ponytail, tress, coil, pendulum, thin spun tobacco
piles: (adj, n) hemorrhoids, heaps, lots, loads, plenty; (n) hemorrhoid, stacks, haemorrhoid, tons; (adj) heartburn, hernia
pillion: (n) saddle, pannel, seat
pillow: (v) rest, breathe, lie, not move; (adj) wadding; (n) throw pillow, Wanger, bed pillow, feather bed, long pillow, padding
pinch: (n, v) nip, arrest, twinge, squeeze; (n) emergency, crisis, exigency; (v) compress, lift, wring, constrict
pincushion: (n) bobbin
pinion: (v) fetter, bind, shackle, restrain, hopple, gag; (n) pennon, quill, wing, irons; (adj) tie
pinions: (n) restraint
pins: (v) feet, legs, pegs, trotters
pint: (n) dry pint
pipe: (n) conduit, duct, flue, passage, pipage; (n, v) channel, cry; (v) squeak, sing, peep, screech
pipes: (n) musette, tubing, tubes, pipe, tube
piquant: (adj) peppery, spicy, engaging, tasty, salty, strong, sharp, gamy; (adj, n) pungent, racy, trenchant. ANTONYMS: (adj) bland, dull, insipid, faint
pitched: (adj) oblique, thrown, slanting, at an angle, leaning; (v) fixed, pight, determined. ANTONYM: (adj) level
pitiable: (adj) forlorn, abject, pathetic, miserable, pitiful, wretched, lamentable, poor, squalid; (adj, v) deplorable, mournful. ANTONYMS: (adj) privileged, strong
pity: (n, v) compassion, ruth; (n) mercy, commiseration, condolence, sympathy, clemency, remorse; (v) sympathize, compassionate, feel sorry for. ANTONYMS: (n) blame, cruelty, indifference, harshness, joy
pityingly: (adv) sympathetically, pitying, sorrily, with compassion, with pity
placid: (adj) calm, composed, easygoing, equable, gentle, quiet, pacific, tranquil, cool, peaceable; (adj, v) peaceful. ANTONYMS: (adj) rough, energetic, stormy, frenetic, excitable, agitated, unstable, bothered, harsh, boisterous
placing: (n) placement, arrangement, disposition, installation, allocation, ordering, disposal, borrowing, composition
plain: (adj) ordinary, comprehensible, intelligible, apparent, manifest, obvious, clear, simple; (adj, n) flat, homely, humble. ANTONYMS: (adj) elaborate, unclear, multicolored, mottled, ornate, concealed, attractive, confused, fussy, obscure, patterned
plainly: (adv) evidently, manifestly, clearly, distinctly, openly, obviously, patently, overtly, definitely; (adj, adv) frankly, honestly. ANTONYMS: (adv) imperceptibly, vaguely, obscurely, figuratively, unclearly, politely, incoherently, implicitly, finely, ambiguously, covertly
planet: (n) globe, satellite, world, asteroid, sphere, planets, follower, celestial body, minor planet, morning star, orbiter
planted: (adj) ingrained, established, set, concealed
playful: (adj) frisky, humorous, kittenish, mischievous, skittish, impish, naughty, merry, lighthearted, frivolous, frolicsome. ANTONYMS: (adj) serious, lethargic, solemn, staid, subdued, heavy
playfulness: (n) mischief, impertinence, gaiety, archness,

friskiness, pertness, merriment, humor, impishness; (n, v) play, sport. ANTONYM: (n) seriousness

pleasantly: (adv) pleasingly, nicely, cheerily, enjoyably, agreeably, delightfully, sunnily, genially, gratifyingly, kindly; (adv, v) happily. ANTONYMS: (adv) disagreeably, offensively, awfully, discordantly, dreadfully, shockingly, unkindly, irritably, harshly, curtly, nastily

pleasing: (adj, n) acceptable; (adj) amiable, lovable, amusing, attractive, gratifying, lovely, pleasant, charming, delightful, inviting. ANTONYMS: (adj) unpleasant, unwelcome, infuriating, disappointing, straight, hurtful, maddening, displeasing, discordant, harsh, frustrating

pleasures: (n) pleasure

plenteous: (adj) abundant, ample, copious, plentiful, bountiful, fertile, fruitful, full, exuberant, rich, generous. ANTONYMS: (adj) meager, sparse

plentiful: (adj) opulent, bountiful, ample, luxuriant, liberal, copious, fruitful, full, abundant, rich, plenty. ANTONYMS: (adj) scanty, meager, sparse, lacking, insufficient, few, infertile

plentifully: (adv) plenteously, bountifully, bounteously, abundantly, profusely, richly, fully, liberally, opulently, amply, prolifically. ANTONYM: (adv) meagerly

pliant: (adj, v) pliable, limber; (adj) elastic, plastic, ductile, malleable, adaptable, compliant, flexile, supple, lithe. ANTONYMS: (adj) inflexible, rigid, rebellious

plodding: (adj) slow, stodgy, heavy, hardworking, ponderous, steady; (n) persistence, grind, donkeywork, drudgery, walking. ANTONYMS: (adj) dilettante, rapid

plot: (n, v) plan, intrigue, cabal, plat, scheme, design, chart; (n) lot, patch, graph; (v) conspire

pluck: (adj, n) nerve; (v) cull, jerk, gather, pick, fleece, grab; (n) grit, courage, boldness; (n, v) pull. ANTONYMS: (n) cowardice, gutlessness; (v) undercharge

plunging: (adv) diving, headlong, pitching, headfirst; (adj) precipitous, low, plummeting; (n) descent

plural: (adj) upwards of, several, certain

poacher: (n) alligatorfish, scorpaenoid, lurcher, armed bullhead, gormandizer, sea poker, smuggler, glutton, sea poacher

pointing: (n) punctuation, indication, scoring

poisoned: (adj, v) tainted; (v) peccant, morbid, tabid; (adj) venenate, made virulent, rabid, resentful, sour, mangy, leprous

polish: (v) furbish, civilize; (n, v) glaze, gloss, rub, shine; (adj, n, v) burnish; (adj, n) gentility; (n) refinement, elegance, cultivation. ANTONYMS: (n) vulgarity, uncouthness, dullness, awkwardness; (v) dirty

polished: (adj) glossy, cultured, finished, refined, smooth, lustrous, genteel, courtly; (adj, v) courteous, civil, polite. ANTONYMS: (adj) rough, coarse, shoddy, unpolished, amateur, awkward, unsophisticated

politely: (adv) kindly, civilly, respectfully, properly, graciously, urbanely, elegantly, gallantly, genteelly, refinedly, considerately. ANTONYMS: (adv) rudely, brusquely, discourteously, disrespectfully, uncooperatively, disagreeably

politeness: (n) civility, courteousness, courtliness, manners, decorum, gentility, good manners, niceness, refinement, gallantry, decency. ANTONYMS: (n) vulgarity, rudeness, incivility, neglect

pond: (n) lake, mere, pool, plash, loch, fishpond, sea, tank, reservoir, millpond, broad

ponder: (v) meditate, consider, cogitate, deliberate, think, reflect, conceive, mull, mull over; (n, v) muse, study. ANTONYMS: (v) decide, wander, ignore

pondering: (adj) pensive, musing, meditative, contemplative, thoughtful, reflective; (n) consideration, deliberation, cogitation, reflection, lucubration

ponderous: (adj) heavy, grave, onerous, burdensome, massive, unwieldy, bulky, stodgy, hard, tedious, dull. ANTONYMS: (adj) elegant, graceful, lively, brisk, manageable

poorest: (adj) lowest, least, worst

pork: (n) pig, hog, swine, pork barrel, porc, red meat, white meat, animal protein, appropriation, beef, cochon de lait

porridge: (v) oatmeal, hasty pudding, mince pie, oyster, pineapple, mango; (n) burgoo, pap, plash, loblolly, podge

possessed: (adj) mad, obsessed, frantic, hysterical, furious, fanatical, infatuated, insane; (v) ought, owed, behoove. ANTONYM: (adj) uninterested

possibilities: (n) potential, field

posture: (n) attitude, condition, stance, deportment, aspect, circumstance, manner, figure, mien; (n, v) pose, place

poultry: (n) chicken, fowl, hen, domestic fowl, bird, Guinea, cochin, dove, fowls, capon, chick

pour: (v) gush, shed, decant, scatter, stream, flow, pelt, discharge, teem, infuse; (n, v) overflow. ANTONYMS: (v) drizzle, trickle

pouring: (adj) gushing, teeming, flowing profusely, burbling, burbly; (n) casting, affusion, downpour, effusion, tapping, baptism. ANTONYM: (adj) light

powerless: (adj) impotent, unable, feeble, incapable, ineffective, ineffectual, infirm, inefficient, nerveless, weak, prostrate. ANTONYMS: (adj) powerful, strong, effective, capable, able

practise: (v) execute, practice, perform, exercise, drill, do, rehearse, learn, take, work out, read

practised: (adj) practiced, expert, adept, good, trained, proficient, seasoned, skilful, skilled, skillful, versed

practising: (adj) practicing, churchgoing

praise: (v) approve, extol, flatter, celebrate, glorify; (n, v) commend, compliment, honor, glory, acclaim; (n) applause. ANTONYMS: (n) criticism, disparagement; (v) reprimand, disparage, reproach, scold, belittle, rebuke, chastise, denigrate, sully

pray: (v) beg, implore, entreat, crave, invite, plead, beseech, appeal, importune, adjure, invoke. ANTONYM: (v) reject

prayer: (n) invocation, plea, entreaty, appeal, orison, request, suit, litany, devotion, supplication, asking

praying: (n) prayer

preach: (v) lecture, exhort, moralize, advocate, sermonize, urge, hold forth, admonish, evangelize, prophesy, moralise

precedence: (n) lead, advantage, anteriority, pas, antecedency,

preference, precession, superiority, supremacy; (adj, n) priority; (adj) rank

precedent: (n) example, prototype, case, case in point, instance, rule, original; (adj, n) antecedent; (adj) preceding, foregoing, anterior

precious: (adj, n) beloved; (adj) valuable, costly, cherished, invaluable, expensive, golden, choice, inestimable, exquisite; (n) darling. ANTONYMS: (adj) cheap, hated, shabby

preciousness: (n) invaluableness, value, valuableness, pricelessness, preciosity, costliness, love, glory, fondness

predetermined: (adj) preset, fixed, set, doomed, preordained, fated, appointed, black, bound, bringing death, bringing ruin. ANTONYMS: (adj) infinite, uncertain, variable

predominate: (v) command, outweigh, govern, reign, overrule, rule; (adj, v) prevail, master; (adj) predominant, preponderate, paramount

pre-eminently: (adv) principally, eminently

preference: (n) predilection, option, liking, choice, election, preferment, precedence, penchant, fondness, partiality, alternative. ANTONYMS: (n) indifference, coercion, antipathy

pregnancy: (n) gestation, richness, womb, abundance, fertility, affluence, wealth, profusion, conception, opulence; (adj) procreation

pregnant: (adj, v) significant; (adj) meaningful, fraught, gravid, expectant, enceinte, heavy, big, meaning; (v) impregnate, conceive. ANTONYM: (adj) nonpregnant

prelude: (n) preliminary, preface, introduction, beginning, overture, preamble, foreword, inception, opening, proem, prolusion. ANTONYMS: (n) postscript, conclusion, ending

premeditated: (adj) intentional, planned, designed, conscious, calculated, studied, intended, prearranged; (v) prepense; (adj, v) aforethought, premeditate. ANTONYMS: (adj) accidental, ingenuous, spontaneous, unintentional, unpremeditated, automatic, casual

prentice: (n) novice, learner, beginner, tyro, tiro, disciple, labor, assimilator; (adj) inexperienced, crude

preoccupation: (n) obsession, abstraction, fixation, preoccupancy, engrossment, distraction, abstractedness, reverie, prepossession, hobbyhorse, brown study. ANTONYMS: (n) concentration, unconcern

preoccupied: (adj) absorbed, abstracted, thoughtful, lost, rapt, distracted, faraway, inattentive, deep in thought, engrossed, pensive. ANTONYMS: (adj) alert, carefree, uninterested

prescriptive: (adj) customary, immemorial, accustomed, traditional; (v) presumptive

presentiment: (n) premonition, hunch, apprehension, feeling, foreboding, anticipation, intuition, boding, suspicion; (v) augury; (n, v) omen

presently: (adv) instantly, directly, currently, before long, shortly, soon, now, at present, readily, just, actually. ANTONYMS: (adv) later, now, formerly

preservation: (n) maintenance, keeping, protection, retention, custody, storage, upkeep, care, embalmment, saving, conservancy. ANTONYMS: (n) release, extinction, abandonment, change, end, neglect

preserved: (adj) kept, conserved, whole, pickled, condite, safe. ANTONYM: (adj) fresh

preserves: (n) conserve, jam, chowchow, conserves, jelly, marmalade, canned food, confiture, European federation of importers of dried fruit, preserved food, apple butter

preside: (v) manage, lead, conduct, command, control, direct, rule, moderate, guide, chair, preside over

presidency: (n) presidentship, presidential term, government, chairmanship, spot, tenure, situation, superintendence, term of office, place, position

presiding: (adj) president, dominant, administrative

pressed: (adj) compact, urgent, printed, pressing, press, stamped, pushed, impelled, incited, bound, driven

pressing: (adj, v) exigent, importunate, important; (adj) imperative, immediate, imperious, instant, critical, insistent; (n) dishing, press. ANTONYM: (adj) mild

presto: (adj, adv) suddenly; (adj) subito, instanter; (adv) quickly, immediately, faster, like a shot, early

presumption: (n) effrontery, confidence, assurance, premise, arrogance, guess, conjecture, surmise, insolence, impertinence, belief. ANTONYM: (n) respect

presumptuous: (adj) arrogant, audacious, forward, assuming, insolent, impertinent, assumptive, familiar, haughty, proud; (adj, n) bold. ANTONYMS: (adj) respectful, shy, timid, humble, modest

presupposition: (n) hypothesis, supposition, presumption, premise, postulation, condition, guess, postulate, assumed position, preconception, premiss

pretend: (adv, v) assume; (adj, v) sham, counterfeit, fake, play; (v) dissimulate, dissemble, make believe, imagine, affect, act. ANTONYMS: (adj, v) real; (adj) genuine, natural, sincere

pretended: (adj, v) sham, mock, counterfeit, pseudo, spurious; (adj) assumed, fake, feigned, fictitious, bogus, affected

preternatural: (adj) unearthly, occult, outlandish, miraculous, uncanny, transcendental, extraordinary, abnormal, weird, nonnatural, otherworldly

pretext: (n) pretense, pretension, color, pretence, mask, plea, guise, sham, appearance; (n, v) excuse, cloak

prettily: (adv) beautifully, charmingly, pleasantly, handsomely, finely, neatly, gracefully, picturesquely, elegantly, delightfully, pleasingly. ANTONYMS: (adv) unattractively, unpleasantly

prettiness: (n) loveliness, good looks, cuteness, attraction, appeal, attractiveness, gracefulness, fineness, charm, elegance, handsomeness. ANTONYMS: (n) ugliness, unattractiveness

prevail: (n, v) triumph, control, govern; (v) dominate, overcome, outweigh, obtain, persist, carry, vanquish; (adj) preponderate. ANTONYM: (v) lose

prevailing: (adj) prevalent, rife, dominant, common, current, overriding, popular, general, influential, epidemic, powerful. ANTONYMS: (adj) insignificant, rare, unusual

prevarication: (n) equivocation, deception, lying, lie, fabrication, fib, fraud, fencing, quibble, falsity; (n, v) shuffling. ANTONYM: (n) correction
prevented: (adj) disallowed, barred, banned. ANTONYM: (adj) legitimate
prick: (n, v) puncture, stab, cock, twinge, spur, bite; (v) impale, pierce, needle; (n) Dick, pricking
prim: (adj) stiff, prudish, precise, priggish, neat, ceremonious, mincing, squeamish, prissy, decorous, demure. ANTONYMS: (adj) relaxed, brash, uninhibited, informal, improper, lax
primitive: (adj, v) primeval, primary; (adj) original, archaic, crude, first, early, antediluvian, aboriginal, primordial, primal. ANTONYMS: (adj) civilized, recent, complicated, factual, advanced
primness: (n) priggishness, Grundyism, propriety, properness, correctitude, prudery, prudishness, reserve, modesty
privacy: (n) secrecy, confidentiality, darkness, retreat, privateness, concealment, loneliness, shelter, solitude, retirement, isolation. ANTONYM: (n) company
privation: (n) hardship, need, deprivation, necessity, poverty, deficiency, misery, impoverishment, destitution, dearth; (n, v) loss. ANTONYM: (n) affluence
privilege: (n) liberty, prerogative, immunity, freedom, grant, franchise, exemption, concession, claim; (n, v) license, permit. ANTONYM: (n) insult
privileged: (adj) exclusive, confidential, inside, free, favored, inner, vested, advantaged; (adj, v) sanctioned; (n) prerogative; (v) warranted. ANTONYMS: (adj) underprivileged, poor, deprived, public, harsh, Standard
privileges: (n) human rights, rights, openness, license, liberty, liberality, independence, civil liberties, immunities, constitutional rights, generosity
probable: (adj) likely, plausible, possible, potential, presumable, feasible, hopeful, convincing, believable, to be expected, specious. ANTONYMS: (adj) improbable, implausible, unbelievable
problematic: (adj) difficult, debatable, doubtful, moot, troublesome, knotty, questionable, unsettled, disputable, fishy, problematical. ANTONYMS: (adj) simple, straightforward, convenient, indisputable
proceed: (v) move, advance, originate, ensue, flow, issue, arise, emanate; (adj, v) pass, run, extend. ANTONYMS: (v) discontinue, recede, regress, return, retreat
proceeded: (v) proceed, yode
proceeding: (n) matter, transaction, affair, procedure, lawsuit, proceedings; (v) deed, act; (n, v) measure; (adv, n) happening; (adj, adv, v) going on
procession: (n) march, convoy, cortege, cavalcade, file, string, pageant, series, sequence, progress, column
proclaim: (v) declare, assert, advertise, broadcast, promulgate, enunciate, herald, decree, divulge, notify, annunciate
profane: (v) desecrate, abuse, violate, defile, outrage, debauch; (adj) irreverent, impious, sacrilegious, unholy; (adj, v) foul. ANTONYMS: (adj) devout, sacred, moral, religious, reverent
professed: (adj) alleged, declared, apparent, avowed, pretended, seeming, supposed, affected, feigned, so-called, purported
profitable: (adj) helpful, beneficial, fruitful, advantageous, good, lucrative, useful, gainful, desirable, fat, valuable. ANTONYMS: (adj) dependent, disadvantageous, unhelpful, fruitless
profligacy: (n) debauchery, dissipation, licentiousness, prodigality, dissolution, depravity, debauch, corruption, improvidence, dissoluteness, vice. ANTONYMS: (n) economy, decency, parsimony
profusion: (n) opulence, abundance, prodigality, plenty, excess, cornucopia, plenitude, profuseness, copiousness, exuberance; (adj) amplitude. ANTONYMS: (n) insufficiency, scarcity
prominent: (adj, n) notable; (adj) noted, great, illustrious, famous, obvious, distinguished, striking, celebrated; (adj, v) eminent, noticeable. ANTONYMS: (adj) unknown, minor, unimportant, low, obscure, insignificant, undistinguished
prompting: (n) stimulation, instigation, prompt, influence, inducement, provocation, hint, invitation, leading question, suggestion; (v) to prompt
pronoun: (n) function word, anaphoric pronoun, personal pronoun
pronounced: (adj) clear, emphatic, distinct, prominent, notable, obvious, salient, evident, definite, bold, palpable. ANTONYMS: (adj) faint, inconspicuous, indefinite, loose, slight, small
prop: (n, v) support, buttress, brace, shore, rest; (n) post, fulcrum, property, mainstay; (v) bolster, hold
propitiatory: (adj) conciliatory, conciliative, expiative, propitiative, apologetic
proposing: (adj) prosy, proponent, making proposals
proposition: (n, v) offer, bid, proffer; (n) proposal, motion, design, approach, assertion, suggestion, plan, premise
propped: (adj) fulcrate
proprieties: (n) custom
propriety: (adj, n) decency, modesty, correctness, aptitude; (n) decorum, fitness, etiquette, civility, grace, politeness, manners. ANTONYMS: (n) impropriety, rudeness, unsuitableness, indecorum, decadence, tactlessness, corruption, vulgarity, indecency
prosaic: (adj) commonplace, dull, monotonous, pedestrian, prosy, ordinary, uninteresting, trite, boring, humdrum, everyday. ANTONYMS: (adj) idealistic, imaginative, sensitive, inspired, exciting, inspiring, interesting, original, romantic
prosecution: (n) accusation, execution, arraignment, impeachment, lawsuit, litigation, performance, suit, continuation, implementation, pursuance. ANTONYM: (n) ambush
prospects: (n) perspective, forecast, circumstances, odds, expectation, possibilities, prediction, projection, scenario, diagnosis
prosper: (v) advance, flower, thrive, grow, bloom, succeed, boom, get ahead, get on; (adj) luxuriate; (n, v) fare. ANTONYMS: (v) deteriorate, collapse, decrease, dwindle, decline
prosperity: (n) affluence, wealth, success, flourish, good fortune, fortune, welfare, opulence, abundance, good, prosperousness. ANTONYMS: (n) failure,

fruitlessness, hardship, insufficiency
prosperous: (adj, n) lucky, auspicious, fortunate; (adj) flourishing, favorable, opulent, easy, comfortable, affluent, advantageous, successful. ANTONYMS: (adj) depressed, unsuccessful, failing, underprivileged, impoverished
prostration: (n) depression, exhaustion, kneeling, breakdown, weakness, dejection, inanition, genuflexion, curtsy; (adj) decline; (adj, n) syncope
protecting: (adj) shielding, defensive, preserving, protected, patron; (n) protection, patrol, conservation, tutelage, momism, preservation
protuberant: (adj, v) prominent; (adj) bulging, bulgy, protruding, gibbous, projecting, protrusive, bellied, bellying, bulbous, conspicuous
providence: (n) forethought, fortune, fate, discretion, God, destiny, care, economy, caution, precaution, chance. ANTONYM: (n) improvidence
provident: (adj) prudent, frugal, sparing, economical, farsighted, cautious, careful, parsimonious, sagacious, wise; (v) precautionary. ANTONYM: (adj) foolish
provoked: (adj, prep) exasperated, inflamed; (adj) irritated, aggravated, infuriated, indignant, irate, huffy, hot, excited; (adv) up in arms. ANTONYMS: (adj) calm, gratuitous, pleased
prudence: (n) foresight, economy, frugality, caution, care, forethought, providence, circumspection, judgment, deliberation; (adj, n) wisdom. ANTONYMS: (n) imprudence, profligacy, generosity, hindsight, recklessness, extravagance
psalm: (n) hymn, chant, psalmody, anthem, song, Salm; (v) sing
puffed: (adj) puff, bloated, distended, puffy, tumid, turgid, swell, breathless, bepuffed, overflowing, out of breath
puffing: (adj) gasping, breathless, panting, bloated, bouffant, breathing heavily, out of breath, distended, puffed; (n) expansion, snorting
pulling: (n) pull, drawing, traction, haulage, actuation, clout, deracination, draughts, extirpation; (adj) attracting, tractive
pulpit: (n) platform, dais, ambo, lectern, hustings, stump, rostrum, forum, desk, stand, state
pulsation: (n) pulse, beat, pounding, impulse, heartbeat, throb, tremor, pulsing, palpitation, throbbing, beating
pulse: (n, v) throb; (n) pulsation, impulse, heartbeat, legume, rhythm, pounding, cadence; (v) pulsate, palpitate, pound
punish: (v) amerce, discipline, castigate, chasten, chastise, penalize, strike, avenge, pay, beat, execute. ANTONYMS: (v) excuse, exonerate, pardon, reward, commend
punishment: (n) correction, penance, chastisement, fine, judgement, rebuke, retribution, reward, castigation, execution; (adj, n) penalty. ANTONYMS: (n) persuasion, exoneration, reward
purchased: (adj) boughten, not homemade; (prep) bribed
purely: (adv) utterly, merely, completely, perfectly, just, fairly, unmixedly, absolutely, virtuously, clearly; (adj, adv) simply. ANTONYMS: (adv) artificially, indecently, immorally, partly
puritan: (adj) blue, puritanic, puritanical, Methodist, formalist, religionist; (n) precisian, devotee, sanyasi, yogi; (v) coquette
purity: (n) holiness, cleanness, cleanliness, virtue, honor, perfection, pureness, sanctity, chastity, elegance; (adj, n) clearness. ANTONYMS: (n) coarseness, impurity, contamination, clutter, dirtiness, corruption, mustiness
purple: (adj) violet, lilac, imperial, regal, royal; (adj, n) empurpled; (v) empurple; (n) magenta, purpleness, ermine, pall
purring: (adj) whining, humming; (n) drone
pursue: (v) follow, dog, prosecute, hunt, course, tail, stalk, persist, hound, haunt, go after. ANTONYMS: (v) shun, eschew, avoid, discourage, lead, precede, find
pursued: (n) hunted person
pushing: (adj) enterprising, pushy, pushful, ambitious, officious, adventurous; (n) push, propulsion, thrusting, actuation; (v) meddlesome
puss: (n) cat, kitten, lass, pussy, pussycat, cunt, chit, countenance, feline, cuckoo, incision
puzzle: (adj, v) perplex, confuse, embarrass; (n) enigma, riddle, mystery, maze; (n, v) nonplus; (v) confound, mystify, baffle. ANTONYMS: (v) clarify, placate, explain; (n) explanation
puzzled: (adj) bewildered, confused, baffled, nonplussed, doubtful, bemused, at a loss, curious, mystified, nonplused, dazed. ANTONYM: (adj) clear
quaint: (adj) odd, funny, picturesque, comical, fanciful, curious, whimsical, strange, queer, peculiar, droll. ANTONYMS: (adj) modern, ordinary, dull
qualities: (n) character, disposition, nature, spirit, tone, quality, role, self, part, traits, individuality
quarrel: (adj, n, v) dispute; (n, v) fight, feud, brawl, row, altercation, argue, conflict, squabble; (n) dissension, difference. ANTONYMS: (n) agreement, reconciliation, acceptance, concord, consensus; (v) agree
quarrelling: (adj) at variance, in dispute, in disagreement, in conflict; (n) dissension
quarry: (n) prey, game, pit, target, stone pit, victim, fair game, lode, butt; (n, v) dig; (v) excavate
quarters: (n) abode, domicile, lodging, residence, quarter, diggings, pad, digs, lodgings, accommodation, barracks
queer: (adj) fantastic, odd, eccentric, funny, curious, gay, peculiar, strange, quaint, fishy, outlandish. ANTONYMS: (adj) conventional, normal, well
queerness: (n) peculiarity, crotchet, quirkiness, quirk, eccentricity, oddness, unfamiliarity, strangeness, singularity, mannerism, hook
questionable: (adj) arguable, debatable, fishy, equivocal, suspicious, uncertain, doubtful, moot, controversial, disputable; (adj, v) fallible. ANTONYMS: (adj) unquestionable, indisputable, certain, irrefutable, trustworthy, acknowledged, plausible, unambiguous, conclusive, strong, reputable
questioning: (adj) inquisitive, curious, suspicious, quizzical, doubting; (n) question, inquiry, query, examination, interrogation, enquiry. ANTONYMS: (adj) illogical, certain, credulous
quieted: (adj) composed
quietness: (n) quiet, serenity, calm, calmness, peacefulness, repose, hush, composure, quietude, silence,

stillness. ANTONYMS: (n) volume, disturbance, loudness, bustle, wildness, turbulence, noise, turmoil, brashness, boldness, movement
quietude: (n) quietness, calmness, peace, composure, placidity, tranquility, repose, serenity, tranquillity, hush, silence
quill: (n, v) pen; (n) feather, pinion, prick, calamus, thorn, shaft, quill feather, plumage, quill pen, spine
quivering: (adj, n) trembling, tremor, quaking, trepidation; (n) palpitation, quiver, vibration; (adj) flutter, quavering, shivering, tremulous. ANTONYM: (adj) steady
rabbit: (n) cony, hare, lapin, bunny, cottontail, leporide, shuttle, coward; (adj) milch cow, seed plot, warren
racked: (adj) assured, confident, miserable
radiance: (n) gleam, glory, brilliance, luster, lustre, beam, brightness, effulgence, sparkle, light; (adj, n) brilliancy. ANTONYMS: (n) darkness, gloominess
rage: (adj, n, v) fume, bluster; (adj, n) wrath, indignation, frenzy, mania; (n) passion, anger, craze, exasperation; (n, v) storm. ANTONYMS: (n) gentleness, composure, calm, equanimity, pleasure, serenity
rags: (adj) refuse, rubble, scourings, sweepings, trash, waste; (n) clothing, tatter, orts, odds and ends, dress
rainbow: (n) tortoise shell, tulip, sunbow, spectrum, peacock, dream, chimera; (adj) multicolored, motley, kaleidoscopic, colorful
rains: (n) wet
rainy: (adj) moist, pluvial, damp, pluvious, stormy, juicy, dirty, soppy, raining, drizzly; (adj, v) showery. ANTONYM: (adj) pleasant
raising: (n) bringing up, nurture, elevation, lift, raise, culture, heave, ascent, ascension, upbringing, rearing
random: (adj) accidental, aimless, patchy, irregular, fortuitous, arbitrary, casual, indiscriminate, incidental; (n) chance, accident. ANTONYMS: (adj) systematic, nonrandom, regular, predictable, ordered, logical, exact, discerning, methodical, organized, deliberate
rank: (n, v) range, order, place, position, grade, class, line, file; (v) arrange, classify; (n) gradation. ANTONYMS: (adj) sparse, pleasant, clean
rapidity: (n) expedition, quickness, promptness, dispatch, celerity, haste, velocity, pace, fleetness, promptitude, speed. ANTONYM: (n) tardiness
rascal: (n) villain, rapscallion, monkey, miscreant, knave, scoundrel, scamp, rogue, varlet, vagabond, brat
rashly: (adj, adv) hastily, headlong; (adv) thoughtlessly, recklessly, impetuously, imprudently, carelessly, indiscreetly, headily, heedlessly, wildly. ANTONYMS: (adv) thoughtfully, prudently, late, pensively, sensibly, responsibly, cautiously, deliberately, patiently
ratepayer: (n) taxpayer, payer
rational: (adj, n) reasonable, just; (adj) intelligent, sane, judicious, logical, mental, sound, sober, wise, practical. ANTONYMS: (adj) illogical, anxious, biased, untenable, unreasonable, unrealistic, unconvincing, physical, intuitive, foolish, delirious
rattling: (adj) lively, brisk, racy, marvelous, fantastic, zippy, snappy, spanking, merry; (adv) very, real
raven: (v) guttle, feed, devour, gulp, harry, eat; (n) crow, plunder; (adj) black, jet; (n, v) gorge
raving: (adj, v) wild; (adj) frantic, delirious, furious, mad, insane; (adj, n) madness, distraction, rage; (n) rabid, delirium
rays: (n) light, sunlight, Selachii, dogfishes, elasmobranch, Elasmobranchii, emission, daylight, sunshine, selachian, subclass Elasmobranchii
reaching: (n) reach, arrival, coming, accomplishment, outreach, advent, achievement, grasp, arriver, getting; (adj) suspicious
readiness: (n) facility, ease, expedition, preparation, promptness, knack, dexterity, eagerness, quickness, fitness; (adj, n) alacrity. ANTONYMS: (n) reluctance, delay
rear: (v) breed, raise, bring up, nurture, educate, foster, nurse; (adj, v) erect; (n) tail; (adj, n) posterior; (adj) after. ANTONYMS: (adj, n) front; (adj) fore; (n) head; (v) level
rearing: (n) breeding, nurture, education, bringing up, raising, fostering, upbringing, background, fosterage, nursing; (adj) rampant
reasoning: (n) argumentation, deduction, ratiocination, illation, logic, argument, abstract thought, sense, judgment, thought; (adj) rational
reawaken: (v) revive, rejuvenate, reproduce, arouse, restart, stimulate, breathe life into, awaken, bring back, reanimate, revitalize. ANTONYM: (v) calm
reawakening: (n) regeneration, rebirth, recovery, resurgence, revitalization, reawakening of a volcano, new start, new beginning
rebelliously: (adv) mutinously, contumaciously, riotously, seditiously, disobediently, insurgently, recalcitrantly, revolutionarily, unruly, naughtily, insubordinately. ANTONYMS: (adv) submissively, loyally, meekly
rebuke: (n, v) reprimand, rebuff, reproach, chide, blame, reproof, lecture, check; (v) castigate, berate; (n) admonition. ANTONYMS: (n, v) praise, compliment; (v) commend, acknowledge, approve; (n) approval
recalling: (adj) revocatory; (n) recognition
receiving: (n) getting, reception, acceptance, taking, adoption, recipiency; (v) receive; (adj) received, accepting, admitting, recipient. ANTONYM: (n) rejection
reckless: (adj) careless, rash, foolhardy, hasty, incautious, extravagant, daring, desperate, brash; (adj, v) imprudent, wanton. ANTONYMS: (adj) cautious, prudent, sensible, wise, responsible, parsimonious, considered, safe, guarded, dutiful, discreet
reckon: (v) estimate, judge, hold, compute, guess, calculate, gauge, rate; (n, v) enumerate, count, number
reckoning: (n) calculation, computation, bill, score, computing, liquidation, clearance; (n, v) count, enumeration, account, estimation
recognize: (n, v) know, discern; (v) acknowledge, identify, distinguish, admit, discover, confess, realize, allow, appreciate. ANTONYMS: (v) deny, diminish, forget, ignore, disregard
recognized: (adj) accepted, noted, recognised, established, illustrious, distinguished, standard, known, notorious; (adj, v) received; (v) ascertained. ANTONYMS: (adj) unofficial, concealed, dubious, informal

recollection: (n, v) mind; (n) reminiscence, recall, anamnesis, remembrance, recognition, memento, memorial, commemoration, memoir, retrospect
recollections: (n) memories, reminiscences, recollection, biography
recommence: (v) renew, restart, regenerate, rejuvenate, start again, take up, take it from the top, start afresh, shuffle the cards, reshuffle the cards, pick up
recommend: (v) advocate, advise, counsel, commend, offer, suggest, move, praise, urge, endorse, promote. ANTONYMS: (v) oppose, reject
recommendation: (n) commendation, suggestion, advice, counsel, advocacy, reference, approval, proposal, admonition, endorsement, character
reconcile: (adj, v) conciliate, accord, harmonize; (v) accommodate, pacify, placate, mediate, adjust, harmonise, make up, propitiate. ANTONYMS: (v) alienate, estrange, provoke, quarrel, segregate, worsen
recover: (v) reclaim, get back, recuperate, retrieve, regain, pick up, get well, restore, heal, convalesce, mend. ANTONYMS: (v) lose, die, decline, aggravate, abandon, worsen, scatter
recovered: (adj) cured, retrieved, well, well again, healthier, aged, improved, whole, better, corned. ANTONYM: (adj) worse
rectitude: (adj, n) justice, honesty, equity; (n) integrity, veracity, virtue, uprightness, morality, purity, propriety; (adj) fidelity. ANTONYMS: (n) immorality, incorrectness, wickedness
rector: (n) minister, pastor, president, manager, principal, governor, clergyman, curate, parson, director, priest
rectory: (n) parsonage, manse, vicarage, residence, habitation, home, glebe house, glebe, dwelling house, domicile, deanery
recurrent: (adj) repeated, recurring, perennial, continual, frequent, intermittent, periodical, serial, persistent, cyclical, habitual. ANTONYMS: (adj) occasional, intermittent, irregular, isolated, rare, single, unique, spasmodic
recurring: (adj) frequent, intermittent, cyclic, periodic, periodical, repeated, repetitive, customary, accustomed, memorable, chronic. ANTONYMS: (adj) irregular, intermittent, spasmodic, unusual, rare, occasional
red-hot: (adj) impassioned, flaming, burning, fiery, incandescent, torrid, enthusiastic, boiling, up-to-date, sultry, contemporary
reeds: (n) Poaceae, grass family, Graminaceae, family Gramineae, family Graminaceae, bamboo, Gramineae
re-enter: (v) return, come back
refined: (adj) delicate, cultured, graceful, polite, gentle, urbane, courteous, courtly, cultivated; (adj, n) polished, pure. ANTONYMS: (adj) unrefined, raw, uncouth, rough, careless, crude, brute, boorish, plain, lowly, inelegant
refinement: (n) culture, cultivation, purification, gentility, polish, finish, civilization, nicety, courtesy, grace; (adj, n) elegance. ANTONYMS: (n) vulgarity, adulteration, tackiness, uncouthness, tastelessness, inelegance, coarseness, clumsiness, awkwardness, crudeness
reflection: (n) contemplation, thought, deliberation, meditation, musing, cogitation, idea, notion, introspection; (n, v) observation, reflexion. ANTONYMS: (n) impulsiveness, confirmation
reformed: (adj) improved, corrected, unorthodox, altered
refrain: (v) desist, cease, fast, avoid, leave off, withhold, stop, spare; (adj, v) forbear; (n) chorus, hold. ANTONYMS: (v) participate, act, consume, persist
refreshed: (adj) invigorated, rejuvenated, reinvigorated, new, novel, revived, impudent, energizing, overbold, energising, clean. ANTONYM: (adj) tired
refuge: (n) sanctuary, asylum, safety, retreat, cover, harborage, haven, shelter, harbor; (n, v) recourse, resort
refusal: (n) denial, declination, negative, rebuff, rejection, no, prohibition, ban, repulse, negation, exclusion. ANTONYMS: (n) permission, acceptance, compliance, approval, disposition, inclination, affirmative, affirmation
refuse: (v) deny, reject, decline, disallow, rebuff, turn down; (adj, n) waste, trash; (n) offal, litter; (n, v) dross. ANTONYMS: (v) allow, receive, permit, offer, dedicate, approve, agree, admit, choose, pass, affirm
refusing: (adj) negative, dismissive, denying, recusative, noncompliant
regain: (v) retrieve, recoup, recuperate, reclaim, recapture, redeem, get, discover, feel, recall, get back
regarding: (prep) about, as regards, for, on, towards, apropos; (adj, prep) with regard to, with reference to; (adj) as to, in regard to, in relation to
registers: (n) archive, chronicles
registry: (n) register, record, entry, enrolment, cadaster, cadastre, nationality, schedule, recording, booking; (v) enrollment
regret: (n, v) grieve, sorrow; (v) bewail, lament, mourn, bemoan, deplore; (n) remorse, penitence, compunction, contrition. ANTONYMS: (v) welcome, praise; (n) idealism, shamelessness, joy, satisfaction
regretful: (adj) penitent, sorry, apologetic, remorseful, nostalgic, bad, sad, melancholy, repentant, unhappy, mournful. ANTONYMS: (adj) joyful, unremorseful, glad, satisfied
regulated: (adj) ordered, arranged, consistent, lawful, temperate, not haphazard, organized; (adv) in time, in harmony, keeping pace, keeping up
rehearsal: (n) narration, dry run, practice, preparation, repetition, dress rehearsal, repeat, description, drill, exercise, narrative
rehearsing: (n) rehearsal
reign: (v) govern, command, predominate, dominate, prevail; (n) dominance, dominion, control, government, administration, kingdom
reinforcing: (n) reinforcement, development, splicing
reins: (n) bridle, Reins of a vault, reins of government, wheel, gearshift, joystick, pedals, potency, power, powerfulness
rejection: (n) dismissal, repulse, denial, refusal, rebuff, abandonment, renunciation, exception, disavowal, negation, repudiation. ANTONYMS: (n) approval, recognition, amalgamation, belief, receipt, welcome, permission, agreement
rejoice: (v) cheer, gladden, triumph, revel, jubilate, gratify, gloat, please; (n, v) delight, glory, joy.

ANTONYMS: (v) lament, mourn, complain

relaxed: (adj) loose, slack, composed, calm, comfortable, easy, cool, at ease, informal, easygoing, happy. ANTONYMS: (adj) nervous, uncomfortable, stiff, anxious, formal, prim, strict, prudish, restless, haggard, reserved

relics: (n) relic, rood, rosary, thurible, reliquary, remainder, remain, leavings, remains, remnants, patera

relieved: (adj) alleviated, thankful, mitigated, prominent, pleased, joyful, fresh, delighted, comfortable, cheerful, happy. ANTONYM: (adj) worried

relieving: (adj) pertinent, comforting, applicable; (n) encouragement

relying: (adj) dependent

remainder: (n) excess, leftover, overplus, end, residue, oddment, balance, rest, surplus; (adj, n) remnant; (adv) after

remark: (n, v) comment, notice, note, mention, regard, mind; (adj, n, v) observe; (v) perceive, mark, discern; (n) observation

remarkably: (adj, adv) outstandingly, markedly, conspicuously, particularly, prominently; (adv) signally, uncommonly, surprisingly, extremely, wonderfully, curiously. ANTONYMS: (adv) normally, slightly, poorly, unexceptionally

remarks: (n) commentary, explanation

remembrance: (n, v) recollection, mind; (n) commemoration, memorial, recall, relic, monument, keepsake, reminiscence, recognition; (adj, n) memento

remembrances: (adj) abord, devoir, respects, welcome; (n) remembrance

reminder: (n) memento, note, memorandum, memorial, prompt, suggestion, commemoration, monument, remembrance, memory; (n, v) hint

remnant: (n) end, relic, remains, residue, fragment, leftover, survival, trace, oddment, balance, stub

remnants: (n) leavings, remains, remainder, rest, leftovers, remnant, offal, leftover, vestige, relics, refuse

remonstrate: (v) argue, complain, expostulate, object, protest, rebuke, dissuade, chide, scold, dispute, warn. ANTONYM: (v) agree

remorse: (n) penitence, contrition, repentance, regret, guilt, penance, sorrow, grief, qualm, ruefulness, compassion. ANTONYM: (n) shamelessness

removing: (adj) departing

rend: (v) pull, lacerate, break, divide, rive, tear, disrupt, mangle; (n, v) rip, split, slash

render: (v) interpret, explain, give, offer, furnish, pay, construe, return, provide, impart, translate

renewal: (n) revival, renaissance, renovation, rehabilitation, restoration, reclamation, update, rebirth, reform, regeneration, innovation. ANTONYMS: (n) deterioration, disappearance

renewed: (adj) changed, born again, new, fresh, redintegrate, rehabilitated, transformed, regenerate, reformed, Renate

renounce: (v) abandon, abdicate, abjure, relinquish, desert, reject, give up, disown, deny, quit, forgo. ANTONYMS: (v) acknowledge, reassert, assert, continue, retain, persist

renunciation: (n) denial, resignation, abnegation, disclaimer, rejection, renouncement, abandonment, waiver, desertion, defection, relinquishment. ANTONYMS: (n) confirmation, assertion, reassertion, acceptance

repeatedly: (adv) often, recurrently, again, time and again, commonly, again and again, successively, regularly, repetitively, habitually, continually. ANTONYMS: (adv) intermittently, never, simultaneously, spasmodically, rarely, manually, infrequently

repeating: (n) repeat, iteration, renewal, repetition, redundancy, copying, reduplication; (adj) repetitious, iterating, iterative, repetitive

repent: (v) deplore, bewail, rue, mourn, lament, atone, sorry, bemoan, feel remorse, grieve, be sorry

repentance: (n) contrition, penance, remorse, regret, compunction, sorrow, guilt, contriteness, grief, attrition, atonement. ANTONYMS: (n) shamelessness, brazenness

repenting: (adj) repentant

repetition: (n) gemination, reiteration, recurrence, replication, iteration, return, repeating, renewal, duplication, rehearsal, reduplication. ANTONYM: (n) disappearance

repose: (n, v) recline, peace, lie, calm; (n) composure, ease, quiet, leisure, recreation, relaxation; (v) lay. ANTONYMS: (n, v) work; (n) activity, panic, agitation

representing: (adj) representative, represented, representant; (n) representation, imitation; (v) mock, pseudo, simulating; (prep) in place of, in lieu of, instead of

reproach: (n, v) blame, rebuke, charge, abuse, disgrace, reprimand, invective; (v) accuse, chide, condemn; (n) condemnation. ANTONYMS: (n, v) praise; (v) commend, approve; (n) compliment, commendation, approval

repudiated: (adj) unacknowledged

repugnance: (n) horror, hatred, antipathy, inconsistency, repulsion, nausea, revulsion, loathing, detestation, aversion, hate. ANTONYMS: (n) pleasantness, love, attractiveness, adoration, liking

repulsion: (n) repugnance, repellency, hatred, antipathy, aversion, horror, disgust, repulse, distaste, hate, rebuff. ANTONYMS: (n) charm, love, magnetism, appeal, liking, delight

requiring: (v) require; (adv) demandingly; (adj) demanding, pressing

requisite: (n) need, necessity, requirement, must; (adj, n) necessary, prerequisite; (adj) required, mandatory, needful, compulsory, obligatory. ANTONYMS: (adj) voluntary, optional, dispensable; (n) inessential, luxury

requisition: (n, v) request, claim, command; (v) commandeer, call, require, exact; (n) application, requirement, order, exaction. ANTONYMS: (v) supply, restore

rescue: (n, v) release, ransom, salvage; (n) deliverance, delivery, relieve; (v) extricate, recover, free, save, redeem. ANTONYMS: (n) involvement, loss, abandonment, downfall; (n, v) capture; (v) endanger, lose, aggravate

resemble: (v) seem, imitate, compare, correspond, to resemble, agree, look, simulate; (adj) look like; (n) resemblance; (adv) alike

resembling: (adj, prep) like; (adj) analogous, parallel, similar, conformable, approximate, semblative, other, probable; (prep) similar to, reminiscent of. ANTONYM: (prep) unlike

resentment: (n) grudge, displeasure, indignation, anger, ill will, rancor, umbrage, rage, envy, grievance, passion. ANTONYMS: (n) friendliness, happiness, contentment, calm
reserved: (adj, n) cold, distant, frigid; (adj) coy, reticent, diffident, bashful, aloof, retiring, quiet, shy. ANTONYMS: (adj) open, forthcoming, uninhibited, relaxed, warm, communicative, talkative, free, definite, cordial, forward
resigned: (adj) patient, acquiescent, yielding, pessimistic, abject, passive, forbearing, obedient; (adj, v) subdued; (v) bowed down, content. ANTONYMS: (adj) resentful, optimistic, intolerant
resist: (n, v) oppose, confront; (v) rebel, defy, revolt, endure, reject, protest, refuse, impede, fight back. ANTONYMS: (v) surrender, yield, assent, agree, suppress, favor, accept, attract, obey, welcome
resisting: (adj) tough, tenacious, sequacious, stringy, tough as whitleather, resistant, recalcitrant, opposing, making resistance, loath; (v) resist
resolute: (adj, n) constant, firm, fixed, steady; (adj, v) determined; (adj) inflexible, brave, adamant, dogged, unbending, courageous. ANTONYMS: (adj) weak, uncertain, uncommitted, timid, fickle, feeble, indecisive, flexible, flippant, hesitant, undecided
resolutely: (adv) determinedly, decidedly, steadfastly, decisively, unfalteringly, boldly, steadily, stubbornly, definitely, resolvedly, unwaveringly. ANTONYMS: (adv) irresolutely, indecisively, uncertainly, feebly, hesitantly, aimlessly
resolved: (adj, v) resolute, firm, certain; (adj) fixed, definite, set, decided, conclusive, intent, solved, positive. ANTONYMS: (adj) undecided, flexible, irresolute, unconfirmed, uncertain
resort: (n, v) repair, haunt; (n) expedient, refuge, holiday resort, playground, covert, retreat; (v) recur, rendezvous, frequent. ANTONYM: (v) rise
resource: (n, v) resort, refuge; (n) expedient, imagination, stock, device, facility, ingeniousness, contrivance, source, resourcefulness
respectability: (n) reputation, propriety, reputability, decorum, honesty, honourableness, gentility, dignity, repute, politeness; (adj) respectableness. ANTONYMS: (n) decadence, indecency, immorality
respectable: (adj) considerable, decorous, fair, estimable, decent, honorable, good, proper, creditable, passable, honest. ANTONYMS: (adj) bad, small, sordid, scruffy, inadequate, unrespectable, paltry, discourteous, inappropriate, sinful, unacceptable
respected: (adj) illustrious, respectable, honored, appreciated, dear, revered, valued, redoubtable, celebrated, glorious, famous. ANTONYMS: (adj) ordinary, unreliable, weak
respectful: (adj) deferential, mannerly, dutiful, courteous, attentive, obedient, reverential, regardful, reverent, polite, humble. ANTONYMS: (adj) cheeky, impudent, insolent, rude, contemptuous, disobedient, scornful, nasty, sneering, irreverent, impolite
respects: (adj) abord, welcome; (n) compliments, greeting, compliment, baisemains, devoir, duty
resting: (adj) idle, quiescent, inactive, dormant, quiet, sleeping, reclining, obligatory, unemployed, asleep; (n) repose
restore: (adj, v) repair, refresh; (v) mend, reinstate, renew, renovate, rejuvenate, replace, repay, fix, rehabilitate. ANTONYMS: (v) break, oust, neglect, confiscate, disrupt, move, kill, remove, worsen
restored: (adj) new, healthy, comfortable, convalescent
restrain: (adj, v) confine; (v) control, rein, hold, curb, bind, contain, prevent, limit, repress; (n, v) check. ANTONYMS: (v) encourage, promote, unleash, impel, release, intensify, increase, free, extend, express, support
restraining: (adj) binding, astringent, warning, abstemious, continuous, moderate, not interrupted, obligatory, opposing; (n) arrest, penning
restraint: (n) bridle, reserve, moderation, modesty, constraint, control, restriction, curb; (n, v) hindrance, check, limit. ANTONYMS: (n) excess, abandon, incentive, decadence, freedom, unrestraint, depravity, disorderliness, indulgence, expression, incitement
resurgent: (adj) dynamical, dynamic
retain: (v) keep, reserve, preserve, have, maintain, continue, hold, employ, engage, hire, own. ANTONYMS: (v) expel, dismiss, release, relinquish, fire, destroy, lack
retained: (adj) maintained, reserved, durable, haunting, lasting, not shed, permanent, persistent, relentless, repaired, aeonian
retarded: (adj) slow, tardy, imbecile, belated, delayed, simple, obtuse, leisurely, dull, deferred, defective. ANTONYM: (adj) precocious
retarding: (n) delay, let, hindrance, impediment, obstacle; (adj) ritardando
reticence: (n) reserve, reservation, uncommunicativeness, taciturnity, silence, reticency, restraint, secrecy, reservedness, muteness, humility. ANTONYMS: (n) chattiness, honesty, nerve, boldness, openness, arrogance, brashness
retired: (adj) obscure, secluded, sequestered, solitary, emeritus, secret, lonely, withdrawn, superannuated, close; (adj, v) covert
retreated: (adj) withdrawn, people
retribution: (n) reprisal, judgment, penalty, punishment, requital, repayment, recompense, reward, revenge, retaliation, restitution. ANTONYM: (n) reward
retrieval: (v) retrieve, revendication; (n) reclamation, redress, deliverance, recuperation, repossession, delivery, reparation, redemption, acquisition. ANTONYM: (n) return
retrieve: (v) recover, rescue, reclaim, recoup, obtain, get, redeem, get back, recuperate, renew, resume. ANTONYMS: (v) award, forget
retrospect: (n, v) review; (v) look back, remember, brush up; (n) memory, recollection, remembrance, rumination, thoughtfulness, recurrence, retrospection
revelation: (n) discovery, exposure, display, revealing, manifestation, betrayal, apocalypse, expose, inspiration, publication; (v) reveal. ANTONYM: (n) concealment
revelry: (adj, n) revels; (n) debauchery, festivity, orgy, merriment, revel, carnival, mirth, gaiety, carousal, jollification
reverence: (n, v) respect, regard, fear, worship, honor, esteem, adore; (n)

deference, adoration, admiration, awe. ANTONYMS: (n) despise, disrespect, irreverence, disdain, disparagement, contempt; (v) dishonor

reverent: (adj, v) pious, devout, religious; (adj) respectful, holy, deferential, godly, reverential, worshipful, pietistic; (v) devotional. ANTONYMS: (adj) blasphemous, disrespectful, impious, irreverent

reverential: (adj, v) deferential; (adj) reverent, dutiful, solemn, pious, devotional, devout, obedient, godly, religious; (v) decorous. ANTONYM: (adj) irreverent

reverently: (adv) reverentially, piously, religiously, devoutly, deferentially, worshipfully, solemnly, godly, courteously, politely, obsequiously. ANTONYM: (adv) irreverently

reverie: (n) dream, fantasy, air castle, brown study, revery, trance, abstraction, castle in Spain, castle in the air; (adj) preoccupation, distraction. ANTONYM: (n) reality

revisit: (v) go back, get back, frequent, come back, review, revise, flood back, return to, go home, hang around in, have a second look at. ANTONYM: (v) depart

revive: (v) refresh, invigorate, quicken, renew, renovate, restore, resuscitate, animate, awake, repair, recreate. ANTONYMS: (v) demoralize, kill, slay, stagnate, abandon, die, drain

revived: (adj) fresh, refreshed, animated, revitalized, alive, invigorated, new

revolve: (v) consider, meditate, deliberate, ponder, circle, contemplate, return, circulate, orbit, rotate; (n, v) gyrate

reward: (n, v) recompense, return, compensation, guerdon, wage, meed, prize, bribe; (v) repay, requite; (n) payment. ANTONYMS: (n) penalty, sentence; (v) dishonor, penalize

rheumatism: (n) arthritis, atrophic arthritis, juvenile rheumatoid arthritis; (v) lumbago, podagra, otalgia, neuralgia, earache, cephalalgia, odontalgia, sciatica

rhythm: (n) cadence, pulse, beat, cycle, tempo, rhyme, musical rhythm, calendar method, calendar method of birth control, metre; (adj, n) meter

ribbons: (n) cavesson, hackamore, jaquima, lines, streamer, streamers, ticker tape, paper chain, decoration, decorations, bunting

rickets: (n) avitaminosis, hypovitaminosis

riddle: (n) mystery, conundrum, puzzle, problem, poser; (n, v) screen, sieve; (v) puncture, strain, filter, sift. ANTONYM: (n) explanation

rider: (n) horseman, appendix, passenger, equestrian, supplement, codicil, provision, clause, addition, condition, corollary

ridiculously: (adv) absurdly, preposterously, idiotically, silly, stupidly, farcically, nonsensically, laughably, comically, derisorily, foolishly. ANTONYMS: (adv) impressively, solemnly, sensitively, rationally

riding: (n) ride, horseback riding, travel, hundred, tithing, soke, travelling, manege, athletics; (v) horsemanship; (adj) awheel

righteously: (adv) uprightly, justly, honestly, right, rightly, correctly, morally, rightfully, properly, truly, rightwisely . ANTONYMS: (adv) improperly, sinfully

rightful: (adj) right, lawful, just, justifiable, proper, legal, equitable, licit, real, genuine, true. ANTONYMS: (adj) wrongful, illegal, unlawful, fake

rightly: (adv) correctly, rightfully, properly, accurately, appropriately, exactly, fitly, straightly, fairly, really; (adv, v) adequately. ANTONYMS: (adv) wrongly, inappropriately, incorrectly, immorally, unjustly, partially, sinfully, unfairly, falsely

rigid: (adj) inflexible, hard, fixed, stiff, strict, austere, firm, set, tense, tight, tough. ANTONYMS: (adj) flexible, soft, elastic, loose, nonrigid, limp, liberal, lenient, adaptable, irresolute, floppy

rigidity: (n) firmness, inflexibility, rigor, hardness, stiffness, rigour, inflexibleness, tension, rigidness, severity, inelasticity. ANTONYMS: (n) malleability, pliability, softness, limpness, looseness, relaxation, cooperation, weakness

ringing: (n) buzz, peal, resonance, ring, sound; (adj) reverberant, jingling, loud, resounding, tinkling, hollow

rings: (n) ornaments, necklaces, jewels, costume jewelry, charms, bracelets

riot: (n, v) revolt, mutiny; (adj, n) disturbance, tumult, hubbub; (n) insurrection, sedition, commotion, disorder, rebellion; (v) rebel

rioting: (n) disorder, tumult, howler, insubordination, orgy, public violence, reveling, grassation, agitation, drunken revelry; (adj) rebellious

ripened: (adj) mature, matured, elderly, aged, maturer, old, mellow, grown, full-grown, cured, adult. ANTONYM: (adj) young

rippling: (n) ripple, wave, riffle, corrugation, moving ridge, wavelet, ripple formation; (adj) flowing, billowy

risen: (v) uprise

rivulet: (n) stream, creek, streamlet, brook, arroyo, brooklet, rillet, runnel, watercourse, gill, river

roadside: (n) verge, shoulder, border, edge, margin

roasting: (n) barbecuing, cookery, cooking; (adj) broiling, baking, burning, boiling, airless, blazing, close; (adj, n) scorching. ANTONYMS: (adj) airy, fresh

robbed: (adj) plundered, rubato, fleeced, borrowed, bereft

robber: (n) highwayman, bandit, mugger, outlaw, plunderer, pillager, burglar, pirate, crook, filcher, spoiler

robbery: (n) depredation, pillage, piracy, plunder, looting, burglary, theft, holdup, thieving, freebooting; (v) rob

robin: (n) robin redbreast, robin-ruddock , robin-redbreast, American robin, thrush, old world robin

roguish: (adj) impish, dishonest, playful, naughty, sly, arch, puckish, rascally, blackguardly, bad, scoundrelly

rolled: (adj) rolling, furled, involute, scroll, coiled, resonant, trilled, reverberative, reverberating, resounding, spiral

rollicking: (adj) mirthful, chirpy, frisky, jaunty, playful, hilarious, sportive, audacious, presumptuous, impudent, frolicky

root: (n) foundation, base, origin, basis, radix, cause, derivation, reason, fountainhead; (adj, n) radical; (v) establish. ANTONYMS: (n) descendant, effect

rooted: (adj, v) fixed; (adj) ingrained, immovable, inveterate, firm, set, frozen, riveted, irremovable; (v) imbedded, posited

roots: (n) heredity, family, origin, line, extraction, ancestry

rope: (n, v) lasso, leash, tie, tape; (n) lariat, noose, hawser, line, string, cord, thread
rosemary: (n) herb, thyme, Labiatae, rosmary, Rosmarinus, rosmarine, pot herbs, parsley, mint family, Lamiaceae, sage
rosy: (adj) hopeful, blooming, optimistic, auspicious, promising, bright, roseate, ruddy, fortunate, flushed, pink. ANTONYMS: (adj) gloomy, depressing, hopeless, unpromising
rounded: (adj) round, curved, circular, orbicular, full, globular, rotund, spherical, blunt, fat, obtuse. ANTONYMS: (adj) straight, sharp, bony, concave, angular, thin
rounds: (n) patrol, beat, route, patient rounds
rouse: (v) provoke, excite, arouse, kindle, awaken, instigate, actuate, disturb, move, agitate, incite. ANTONYMS: (v) dampen, dishearten, suppress, douse, inhibit, stifle, quench
roused: (adj) excited, awake, susceptible, emotional, elated, interested
rousing: (adj) stirring, provocative, bracing, thrilling, inspiring, exhilarating, moving; (n) awakening, wakening, stimulation; (v) rouse. ANTONYMS: (adj) conciliatory, dull, relaxing
rove: (v) gad, ramble, wander, range, gallivant, stray, stroll, tramp, drift, err, meander. ANTONYM: (v) settle
rubbed: (adj) polished, refined, terse, attrite, marked, accomplished, fretten
rubbing: (n) friction, abrasion, grinding, detrition, rub, grip, resistance, chafe, sweat, travail, massage. ANTONYM: (n) smoothness
ruddy: (adj) cherry, rubicund, rosy, flushed, florid, sanguine, reddish, glowing, blooming, crimson; (adj, adv) blushing
rude: (adj, n) rough, impudent, coarse, abrupt, bold; (adj) blunt, discourteous, impolite, brutal, crude, mean. ANTONYMS: (adj) polite, refined, courteous, chivalrous, civil, proper, decent, exact, clean, gentle, inoffensive
rudeness: (n) disrespect, audacity, insolence, impudence, discourtesy, incivility, effrontery, bad manners, impoliteness, impropriety, primitiveness. ANTONYMS: (n) civility, refinement, propriety, courteousness, courtesy, decency, respect, diplomacy, praise, thoughtfulness, gentleness
ruggedness: (n) inclemency, toughness, huskiness, gruffness, severity, asperity, austerity, coarseness, hardness, craggedness, formidability
ruin: (n) devastation, desolation; (adj, n) downfall; (v) break, consume, demolish, destroy; (n, v) doom, ravage, destruction, damage. ANTONYMS: (v) conserve, enhance, save, restore, improve; (n, v) respect; (n) making, success, triumph, rise, preservation
ruinous: (adj) harmful, baleful, disastrous, calamitous, injurious, deleterious, dilapidated, blasting, baneful, pernicious; (adj, n) subversive. ANTONYMS: (adj) beneficial, fortunate, harmless
ruled: (adj) lined, lawful, subordinate, subject
ruminating: (adj) pensive, ruminal, ruminant; (n) abstraction
rumination: (n) contemplation, musing, consideration, reflexion, meditation, introspection, thought; (v) deglutition, epulation, gulp, manducation
runaway: (adj, n) renegade, delinquent; (n) deserter, romp, walkaway, refugee, absconder, runagate, escapee, laugher; (adj) decided. ANTONYM: (n) challenge
rung: (n) rundle, grade, degree, stage, stair, spoke, stave, crosspiece, tread, step; (adj) ringed
rush: (n, v) charge, flood, dash, flow, gush, race, run, speed, attack; (adj, n, v) burst; (n) onrush. ANTONYMS: (v) delay, dawdle, linger, wander, amble, hesitate, crawl, trickle; (n) shortage, slowness, unimportance
rushed: (adj) hurried, rush, precipitate, rapid, unexpected, hassled, immediate, instant, instantaneous, quick, speedy. ANTONYMS: (adj) unhurried, slow, considered, gradual
rustic: (n) countryman, peasant; (adj) rural, pastoral, boorish, country, bucolic, provincial, hick, agrestic, countrified. ANTONYMS: (adj) town, urbane, cultured, city, sophisticated
rusticity: (n) inurbanity, gaucherie, stiffness, simplicity, faux pas, gaffe, coarseness, clumsiness, gracelessness; (adj) low life, mauvais ton
rustling: (n) rustle, whispering, whisper, larceny; (adj) murmurous, susurrous, active, soughing
rutted: (adj) uneven, not smooth, lined, jagged, irregular, rough, furrowed, crumpled, potholed, not level, bumpy. ANTONYM: (adj) level
sack: (v) plunder, dismiss, ransack, despoil, rob; (n, v) bag, discharge, fire; (n) pocket, sac, pouch. ANTONYMS: (v) hire, detain
sacrament: (n) token, penance, rite, ritual, liturgy, symbol, communion, baptism, Eucharist, confirmation, ceremony
sacred: (adj) holy, hallowed, dedicated, consecrated, divine, religious, pious, spiritual, inviolable, blessed; (adj, v) solemn. ANTONYMS: (adj) profane, unconsecrated, cursed, breakable
sacredly: (adv) divinely, saintly, solemnly, hallowedly, piously, sanctifiedly, inviolately, spiritually, blessedly, dedicatedly, holily
sacredness: (n) sanctity, inviolability, godliness, saintliness, innocence, piety, devotion, blessedness, sanctitude, righteousness, goodness
sacrifice: (n, v) oblation, forfeit; (v) offer, immolate, offer up, give, give up, relinquish; (n) immolation, loss, forfeiture
sadder: (adj) doleful
saddle: (v) charge, load, burden, encumber, adjure, bear down, blame; (n) pillion, seat, saddleback, bicycle seat. ANTONYM: (v) relieve
sadly: (adv) pitifully, dolefully, unfortunately, mournfully, sorrowfully, woefully, dejectedly, pathetically, wretchedly, forlornly; (adj, adv) seriously. ANTONYMS: (adv) cheerfully, contentedly, gladly, joyfully, fortunately, luckily, enthusiastically
sadness: (n, v) melancholy, despondency; (adj, n) grief, distress; (n) misery, sorrow, desolation, regret, gloom, mourning, affliction. ANTONYMS: (n) joy, amusement, cheerfulness, laughter, contentment, comfort, cheer, hopefulness
safely: (adv) surely, safe, certainly, cautiously, soundly, strongly, sure, steadily, harmlessly, unharmedly, unhurtly. ANTONYMS: (adv) harmfully, hazardously, loosely
sallow: (adj) pasty, pallid, bloodless,

sickly, wan, ashen, fair, white, tawny, sandy; (n) osier. ANTONYMS: (adj) dark, glowing

sally: (n) foray, quip, sortie, crack, joke, wisecrack, coupe de main, attack, onset, jaunt, excursion

salt: (adj) salty, saline, briny, brackish, pungent; (v) cure, pickle; (n) salinity, common salt, alkali; (adj, n) spice

salvation: (n) redemption, rescue, delivery, preservation, savior, deliverance, liberation, expiation, propitiation; (adj, n) justification; (adj) conversion. ANTONYMS: (n) damnation, destruction

sameness: (n) equality, resemblance, monotony, similarity, identicalness, parity, unvariedness, oneness, likeness, dullness, tedium. ANTONYMS: (n) variety, variation, uniqueness, inconsistency, contrast, variability

sampler: (n) sampling element, pattern, specimen, soil sampler, tastetester, taster, observation station, fancywork, sampling device, sampling station

sanctioned: (adj) approved, legitimate, authorized, canonical, official, legal, accepted, canonic, orthodox; (v) allowed; (adj, v) privileged

sane: (adj, n) reasonable, lucid; (adj) rational, judicious, right, sensible, normal, wise, wholesome, sound, prudent. ANTONYMS: (adj) unbalanced, insane, crazed, delirious, unreasonable, irrational, foolish

sarcasm: (adj, n) irony, ridicule, satire, humor; (n) gibe, bitterness, jeer, scorn, insinuation, taunt; (adj) sarcastic. ANTONYM: (n) kindness

sarcastic: (adj) sharp, poignant, caustic, bitter, biting, pungent, acid, acrimonious, ironical; (adj, v) derisive, satirical. ANTONYMS: (adj) sympathetic, pleasant, approving, kind, complimentary, mild, respectful

sarcastically: (adv) satirically, mordantly, sharply, bitingly, ironically, tartly, cynically, scornfully, mockingly, scathingly, derisively. ANTONYM: (adv) gently

satan: (n) Lucifer, devil, deuce, the Devil, Old Nick, Belial, fiend, Prince of Darkness, Dickens, archfiend, daemon

satin: (adj) glossy, sleek, velvet, down, silky, silklike, silken, satiny, velure; (n) cloth, fabric

satisfied: (adj) happy, content, full, pleased, confident, complacent, persuaded, fulfilled; (adj, v) certain, sure; (v) convinced. ANTONYMS: (adj) frustrated, anxious, disgruntled, hungry, insistent, pensive, unsure, dissatisfied, ashamed

satisfy: (v) please, persuade, meet, satiate, indulge, sate, appease; (adj, v) content, fill, suffice, do. ANTONYMS: (v) intensify, displease, disappoint, disgruntle, frustrate

savagely: (adv) brutally, ferociously, barbarously, wildly, barbarianly, viciously, uncivilizedly, violently, felly, untamedly, roughly

saving: (adj, n) frugal, economical; (adj) thrifty, save; (n) economy, conservation, salvation, rescue, preservation, cut, retrenchment. ANTONYMS: (n) extravagance, expenditure; (adj) spendthrift

savior: (n) rescuer, saviour, deliverer, saver, redeemer, liberator, Christ, benefactor, Jesus Christ, tutelary saint, helper

savoury: (adj) piquant, dainty, appetizing, peppery, spicy, luscious, zesty, tasty, inoffensive, juicy, gingery

scamp: (n) rascal, imp, miscreant, scalawag, rogue, monkey, villain, brat, scallywag, rapscallion; (v) skimp

scandal: (n) disgrace, dishonor, gossip, outrage, discredit, rumor, infamy, disrepute, ignominy, detraction, shame

scant: (adj) insufficient, scanty, skimpy, poor, few, inadequate, narrow, little; (adj, v) meager, bare; (v) skimp. ANTONYMS: (adj) plentiful, extensive

scantily: (adv) sparingly, scarcely, poorly, sparsely, insufficiently, skimpily, meagerly, scantly, slenderly, sparely; (adj, adv) thinly. ANTONYMS: (adv) plentifully, profusely, fully

scanty: (adj) insufficient, few, inadequate, bare, deficient, poor, narrow, scant, light; (adj, v) spare, lean. ANTONYMS: (adj) generous, abundant, ample, strong

scarcely: (adv) narrowly, rarely, hardly, just, scarce, uncommonly, insufficiently, scantily, scantly, only just, seldom. ANTONYMS: (adv) easily, liberally

scarcity: (n) paucity, dearth, lack, deficiency, rarity, insufficiency, scarceness, infrequency, defect, deficit, rareness. ANTONYMS: (n) plethora, abundance, affluence, excess, frequency, provision, glut, profusion, intensity

scared: (adj) afraid, frightened, fearful, anxious, nervous, timid, intimidated, terrified, horrified, panicky; (adj, adv) cowardly. ANTONYMS: (adj) confident, fearless, brave

scarify: (v) scar, indent, dent, jag, nick, notch, rack, score, scollop, Vandyke, scotch

scattered: (adj) dissipated, thin, disordered, disconnected, confused, sparse, sporadic, distributed, rare, diffuse; (v) disperse

scattering: (n) diffusion, dissipation, dispersion, distribution, scatter, dissemination, sprinkle, sprinkling, strewing; (adj, n) spreading; (adj) distributive

scent: (n, v) fragrance, smell, odor, essence, nose; (n) aroma, bouquet, redolence, odour; (adj, n) savor, flavor. ANTONYMS: (n) stench, stink

scented: (adj) fragrant, perfumed, aromatic, balmy, sweet, redolent, odoriferous, spicy, savory, smelling, angelical. ANTONYMS: (adj) scentless, smelly

sceptical: (adj) distrustful, questioning, doubting, skeptical, sceptic, unbelieving, disbelieving, doubtful, dubious, suspicious, skeptic

schooling: (n, v) training; (n) learning, instruction, school, drilling, teaching, pedagogy, edification, coaching, preparation, doctrine

scissors: (n) clipper, shears, pair of scissors, scissors hold, compound lever, edge tool, scissor grip, scissors grip; (adj, n) cutters

scorn: (v) despise, contemn, reject; (n, v) ridicule, neglect, disregard, deride, slight; (n) contempt, derision, mockery. ANTONYMS: (n, v) respect, praise; (v) appreciate, revere, value, approve, admire, accept; (n) admiration, commendation, humility

scornful: (adj) disdainful, haughty, arrogant, sarcastic, disparaging, derisive, mocking, abusive, scathing, opprobrious, insulting. ANTONYMS: (adj) approving,

complimentary, humble, sympathetic, admiring
scornfully: (adv) disdainfully, disparagingly, haughtily, derogatorily, condescendingly, contumeliously, sneeringly, arrogantly, sarcastically, derisively, mockingly. ANTONYM: (adv) humbly
scoundrel: (n, v) rascal; (n) knave, blackguard, cad, villain, ruffian, miscreant, crook, rapscallion, varlet, scalawag
scour: (v) scrub, ransack, burnish, abrade, furbish, polish, search, cleanse, graze, buff; (adj, v) flush. ANTONYM: (v) dirty
scrag: (v) garrotte, garotte, strangulate, hang, strangle, fret; (n) throat, scrag end; (adj) snick, snatch, snack
scrape: (n, v) scratch, graze, score, mark; (v) rub, pare, rake, grate, chafe, abrade; (n) abrasion
scratch: (n, v) mark, graze, notch, scrape, nick, scrabble, dent, scar; (v) rub, chafe, rake. ANTONYM: (v) soothe
scratched: (adj) hurt, abraded, sgraffito, raw, dented, spoiled, damaged, injured
scratching: (n) scrape, scraping, abrasion, mark, scar, poor handwriting, incision, excoriation, chicken feed; (adj) hoarse, abrasive
scream: (n, v) shout, call, howl, yell, screech, shriek, wail; (v) cry out, roar, bellow, hollo. ANTONYM: (n) bore
screaming: (adv) screamingly; (n) shrieking, shriek, screeching, screech, vociferation; (adj) garish, loud, uproarious, showy, noisy
screening: (n) screen, masking, concealment, cover, covering, viewing, shield, grading, showing, hiding, display
screwed: (adj) threaded, firm, maudlin, muddled, muzzy, raddled, corned; (n) whittled
scruple: (adj, v) hesitate, demur, pause; (n) hesitation, qualm, misgiving, distrust, objection; (n, v) mistrust; (v) falter, question
scrupulous: (adj) careful, punctilious, exact, conscientious, particular, painstaking, accurate, prudent, meticulous, rigorous, cautious. ANTONYMS: (adj) sloppy, unscrupulous, slapdash, relaxed, guilty, deceitful
scrutinize: (v) inspect, examine, review, consider, audit, investigate, explore, search, analyze, check; (adj, v) scan. ANTONYM: (v) ignore
seals: (n) Pinnipedia, key, talisman, aquatic mammal, signet, suborder Pinnipedia, sea Lions
searching: (adj) piercing, inquisitive, probing, acute, exhaustive, curious, inquiring, profound, exploratory; (adj, v) cutting; (v) excruciating
seasoned: (adj) veteran, flavoured, flavored, mature, ripe, versed, hardened, confirmed, practised, accustomed, sophisticated. ANTONYMS: (adj) green, unseasoned, inexperienced, mild
seated: (adj) sat, sedentary
seating: (n) room, circle, parterre, parquet, orchestra, service, way, base, footing, housing, stand
seclusion: (n) retreat, segregation, retirement, isolation, secrecy, concealment, insulation, separation, hermitage; (adj, n) solitude, loneliness. ANTONYMS: (n) company, closeness, inclusion
secrets: (n) secrecy
sect: (n) denomination, clan, religion, party, order, cult, category, clique, class, group, Unit sect
secured: (adj) secure, protected, firm, locked, fast, bonded, bolted, barred, latched, securer, obtained
seed: (n) issue, posterity, root, progeny, offspring, origin, nucleus, brood, embryo; (v) inseminate, plant
seedy: (v) indisposed; (adj, v) worn; (adj) scruffy, sordid, squalid, dingy, grubby, decrepit, sleazy, infirm, shabby. ANTONYMS: (adj) agreeable, classy, seedless, healthy, pristine, respectable, smart, salubrious, wholesome
seeming: (adj) ostensible, superficial, illusory, outward, probable, deceptive, specious; (adj, n) appearance, semblance; (n) aspect, show. ANTONYMS: (adj) actual, deep, inner
seized: (adj) confiscate, appropriated, condemned, apprehended, grasped, taken, held, seised, detained, obtained, arraught
seizing: (v) seize; (n) seizure, clutches, prehension, taking, apprehension, capture, infection; (adj) catching, galling, controlling
seldom: (adj) scarce, rare, few, infrequent; (adv) occasionally, infrequently, uncommonly, hardly, scarcely, not often, once in a blue moon. ANTONYMS: (adv) often, seldom
self-command: (n) self-control, self-government, self-restraint, discipline, presence
self-consciousness: (n) embarrassment, inhibition
self-important: (adj) arrogant, proud, vain, pompous, consequential, bumptious, egotistic, exalted, stuffy
selfish: (adj) mean, greedy, mercenary, egotistical, egotistic, egoistic, self-interested, stingy, egocentric, self-centered, covetous. ANTONYMS: (adj) selfless, altruistic, generous, altruism, considerate, philanthropic, thoughtful, constructive, concerned, abstemious, kind
self-possessed: (adj) calm, composed, level-headed, steady, imperturbable, serene, cool, collected, placid, unflappable, sober
self-possession: (n) composure, poise, imperturbability, serenity, aplomb, coolness, balance, restraint, self-control, morale, presence
self-reproach: (n) regret, repentance, shame, penitence, contrition, guilt
sending: (n) forwarding, dispatch, transmission, transmittal, send, despatch, mailing, transport, dispatching, dispatchment, conveyance
sensations: (n) feelings, vibrations, ambiance
senses: (adj) sober senses, sound mind; (n) reason, mind, conception, consciousness, judgment, faculties, mother wit, right mind, sanity
sensibility: (adj, n, v) feeling, notion; (n, v) sensation, appreciation, sense; (n) emotion, sensitivity, consciousness, perceptivity, awareness; (adj, n) sentiment. ANTONYM: (n) insensitivity
sensitiveness: (n) sensitivity, susceptibility, antenna, sensibleness, feeler, responsiveness, keenness, sensation, acumen; (adj) softness, delicacy
sentiment: (n) emotion, mind, notion, feeling, persuasion, opinion, judgment, sense, judgement, attitude, impression
separated: (adj, prep) separate, isolated, disjoined, distinct; (adj, adv) apart; (adj) detached, divided, disjointed, free, disjunct, discrete. ANTONYMS: (adj) attached, connected
separation: (n) disjunction, detachment, disunion, seclusion,

disconnection, rift, isolation, divorce, parting, departure; (n, v) division. ANTONYMS: (n) unification, closeness, marriage, union, unity, connection, bond, integration, synthesis, inclusion, meeting

servant: (n) manservant, domestic, lackey, maid, employee, flunkey, retainer, boy, footman, flunky, menial. ANTONYMS: (n) master, mistress

serviceable: (adj) practical, helpful, handy, profitable, beneficial, effective, useful, convenient, efficient, operative, practicable. ANTONYMS: (adj) impractical, unusable, unserviceable, useless, flimsy, worthless

settle: (adj, n, v) fix, establish, confirm; (n, v) place, set; (v) resolve, clarify, pay, regulate, adjudicate, agree. ANTONYMS: (v) float, wander, prolong, owe, bungle, open, provoke, rise, weaken, worsen, complicate

settler: (n) migrant, colonist, immigrant, inhabitant, homesteader, squatter, planter, newcomer, colonizer, sockdolager, standish. ANTONYM: (n) native

severed: (adj) cut off, cut, broken, separate, Severn, disconnected, rent off, disrupt, disengaged, torn, disrupted

severely: (adv) seriously, gravely, badly, sternly, harshly, hardly, strictly, rigidly, violently, sharply, strongly. ANTONYMS: (adv) leniently, gently, elaborately, lightheartedly, slightly, mildly, compassionately, tenderly, warmly, superficially, modestly

severity: (n) rigor, austerity, harshness, roughness, intensity, inclemency, asperity, gravity, hardness, tyranny, violence. ANTONYMS: (n) leniency, pleasantness, flexibility, clemency, softness, insignificance, warmth, lenience, brightness

shabby: (adj) poor, abject, mean, mangy, low, sorry, decrepit, worn, sordid, ragged; (adj, v) frayed. ANTONYMS: (adj) pristine, elegant, opulent, honorable, decent, new, neat, comfortable, tasteful, strong, respectful

shade: (n, v) screen, tinge, shadow, tint, color, cloud; (n) ghost, hue, blind, conceal, tone. ANTONYMS: (n) brightness, glare; (v) brighten, clarify, expose

shadows: (n) dark, darkness, night, dimness, dusk, fogginess, mistiness, gloom, cloudiness. ANTONYM: (n) brightness

shadowy: (adj) indistinct, misty, dark, faint, obscure, hazy, gloomy, vague, shady, insubstantial, dusky. ANTONYMS: (adj) clear, palpable, light, distinct, open

shake: (n, v) jolt, beat, jar, quiver, wave; (v) agitate, excite, disturb; (adv, v) brandish; (adj, v) quake, totter. ANTONYMS: (v) soothe, steady

shaken: (adj) jolted, agitated, dilapidated, frayed; (v) passe, lame, broken, threadbare, wilted, shaky, vibrate

shaking: (adj, n) quivering, tremor, jarring; (n) quiver, palpitation, quake; (adj) quaking, shaky, flutter, unsteady, shivering

shallowness: (n) frivolity, glibness, ignorance, trivia, triviality, commonplace, depth, shoaliness. ANTONYMS: (n) profundity, substance

shame: (n, v) disgrace, dishonor, discredit, humiliate, degrade, chagrin; (n) humiliation, modesty, scandal, insult; (v) abash. ANTONYMS: (n) pride, glorification, making, worthiness; (v) acknowledge, glorify, respect, dignify

shaped: (adj) formed, fashioned, shapen, made, created, beaten, educated, featured, having features, built, constructed

shaping: (adj, n) forming; (adj) formative, molding; (n) forging, grooving, rifling, defining, form, organization, making, conformation

sharing: (n) communion, dispensation, allotment, generosity, apportionment, pooling, allocation, division, show and tell, sharing out; (adj) sexual

sharply: (adj, adv) piercingly, harshly, penetratingly; (adv) keenly, severely, abruptly, trenchantly, shrewdly, bitingly, cuttingly, bitterly. ANTONYMS: (adv) gently, kindly, sweetly, politely, gradually, pleasantly

sharpness: (n, v) keenness, edge; (n) severity, bitterness, asperity, acumen, poignancy, pungency, quickness, perspicacity; (adj, n) roughness. ANTONYMS: (n) dullness, haziness, softness, slowness, indistinctness, gentleness, evenness, courtesy, blandness, stupidity, kindness

shawl: (n) wrap, mantle, cape, muffler, scarf, pall, mantlet Mantua, wrapper, kerchief, headscarf, stole

shed: (v) discard, drop, moult, scatter, exuviate, molt, cast off, dismiss; (n) shack, hut, cabin. ANTONYMS: (v) keep, cover; (adj) persistent

sheepish: (adj) coy, diffident, shamefaced, bashful, shy, guilty, embarrassed, nervous, skittish, faint-hearted, pusillanimous. ANTONYMS: (adj) unabashed, proud

shelf: (n) ledge, rack, bank, flat, projection, bookshelf, shelves, board, frame, shallows; (adj, n) shallow

shelter: (n, v) guard, refuge, harbor, protect, shield; (adj, n, v) screen; (n) protection, asylum, sanctuary, security, hut. ANTONYMS: (n) danger, exposure; (v) endanger

sheltered: (adj) secure, comfortable, screened, safe, secluded, cozy, snug, covered, shaded; (adj, v) private; (v) covert. ANTONYMS: (adj) vulnerable, sunny, exposed, public, harsh, bleak

shepherd: (n) clergyman, sheepman, minister, herdsman, sheepherder, priest, presbyter; (v) lead, conduct, guide, guard

shepherdess: (n) sheepman, sheepherder, herdess, herder, cowherd

shilling: (n) York shilling, Tanzanian shilling, British shilling, Kenyan shilling, Ugandan shilling, Somalian shilling, dock, cork, farthing, coin, cheat

shilly-shally: (n) indecision, irresoluteness, irresolution, hesitance; (v) halt, vacillate, procrastinate, doubt, waste time; (adj) irresolute, hesitant

shining: (adj, v) brilliant; (adj) lustrous, radiant, glossy, luminous, glorious, glowing; (adj, n) lucid, resplendent, clear; (v) shine. ANTONYMS: (adj) dull, pale, blemished

shirk: (v) evade, avoid, dodge, duck, goldbrick, elude, malinger, eschew, parry, blink, flinch. ANTONYMS: (v) accept, court

shirt: (n) Jersey, chemise, blouse, hair shirt, dress shirt, evening shirt, polo shirt

shivering: (adj) quivering, shaking, trembling, shaky, quaking, tremulous, shuddering, chilled; (n) chill, cold, shiver. ANTONYM: (adj) composed
shocking: (adj) frightful, shameful, formidable, ghastly, horrible, hideous, disgraceful, disgusting, scandalous; (adj, v) offensive, abominable. ANTONYMS: (adj) admirable, delightful, pleasing, lovely, comforting, honorable, wonderful, bland, inoffensive, decent, excellent
shoe: (n) horseshoe, sandal, shoes, moccasin, footgear, footwear, skid, flippers, anklet, flipper, track shoe
shorten: (v) condense, reduce, abbreviate, clip, abridge, cut, curtail, cut back, contract, compress, dock. ANTONYMS: (v) expand, prolong, extend, complicate
shorter: (adj) smaller, inferior
shortest: (adj) direct, brusk, brusque, choleric, curt, directer, hotheaded, least, irascible, lowest, most direct
shortness: (n) lack, abruptness, brusqueness, curtness, briefness, shortage, conciseness, gruffness, curtailment, short, shortcoming. ANTONYMS: (n) tallness, height, longness, wordiness, courtesy
short-sighted: (adj) shortsighted, unwise, stupid, narrow-minded, crazy, ill-advised, half-baked, foolish, improvident
shrank: (v) minify
shrink: (adj, v) recoil; (n, v) flinch, wince; (v) contract, shorten, lessen, diminish, cower, reduce, quail, decrease. ANTONYMS: (v) increase, enlarge, grow, stretch, swell, bloom, rise, inflate
shrinking: (n) contraction, recoil, reduction, decrease, condensation; (n, v) lessening; (adj) timid, fearful, shy, bashful; (adj, adv) cowardly. ANTONYM: (adj) confident
shrouding: (v) envelop
shrunk: (adj) contracted, wizened, withered, shrivelled, shriveled, wizen, insipid, drawn grain, wearish
shrunken: (adj) wizened, shrivelled, shrunk, withered, contracted, wizen, narrow, dried, thin, lean, sear. ANTONYMS: (adj) plump, bloated
shudder: (adj, n, v) shake, quake, tremble; (n, v) quiver, twitch, thrill; (n) quivering, shivering, chill, frisson; (v) flutter
shuffled: (adj) disorganized
shutting: (n) closing, conclusion, end, closure, ending, finish, mop up, culmination, closedown; (adj) confining, claudent. ANTONYM: (n) opening
shuttle: (n) birdie, rabbit, bird, space shuttle, badminton equipment, razzing, raspberry, public transport; (v) ferry, commute, exchange
shyly: (adv) timidly, shily, coyly, diffidently, timorously, with reserve, embarrassedly, clumsily, uncertainly, tentatively, unremarkably. ANTONYMS: (adv) boldly, brashly, brazenly, urbanely, conspicuously, confidently, decisively
shyness: (n) diffidence, modesty, bashfulness, humility, shame, timidity, coyness, pudency, timorousness, backwardness, timidness. ANTONYMS: (n) sociability, brashness, confidence, urbanity, arrogance
sickly: (adj, adv) poorly; (n) invalid; (adj) sick, ailing, pale, sallow, indisposed, morbid, diseased; (adj, n, v) infirm; (adj, v) faint. ANTONYMS: (adj) healthy, bitter, robust
sickness: (n, v) disease, indisposition, malady, disorder, distemper, ailment; (n) complaint, qualm, nausea, disgust, queasiness
sideways: (adj) side, crabwise, crosswise, indirect; (adv) obliquely, laterally, sidelong, sideway, sidewise, sidewards; (adj, adv) aslant. ANTONYMS: (adj) level, direct; (adv) across
siege: (n) blockade, envelopment, encirclement, investment, besieging; (v) beleaguer, encompass, environ, envelop, encircle, beset
sigh: (n, v) groan, suspire, murmur; (v) breathe, languish, pine; (n) breath, wail, whimper, whine, suspiration
sightless: (adj) blind, viewless, unseeing, invisible, unsighted, visionless, lacking sight, seemless, blinder
silently: (adv) mutely, stilly, quietly, noiselessly, soundlessly, taciturnly, wordlessly, secretly, speechlessly, placidly, tacitly. ANTONYMS: (adv) loudly, audibly, openly, brazenly
silk: (adj) silky, down, silken, velure, velvet; (n) silks, satin, cloth, animal fiber, fabric, dental floss
silken: (adj) glossy, silk, sleek, soft, satiny, satin, shiny, smooth, slick, downy, mild. ANTONYMS: (adj) coarse, dull, rough
silvery: (adj) silvern, argent, bright, white, gray, rich, silverish, melodious, fair, Argentine, clear
simpleton: (n) fool, blockhead, dolt, dunce, numskull, ninny, nincompoop, booby, sap, dummy, dullard
simplicity: (n) plainness, simpleness, easiness, ease, clarity, austerity, gullibility, severity, artlessness, ignorance; (adj, n) inexperience. ANTONYMS: (n) difficulty, complexity, ambiguity, magnificence, sophistication, dishonesty, clutter, warmth
simultaneous: (adj) concurrent, at the same time, coincidental, synchronous, contemporary, synchronal, contemporaneous, concomitant, cooccurring, coinciding, concurrently. ANTONYMS: (adj) separate, independent, asynchronous, disparate, consecutive
sincerely: (adv) candidly, honestly, really, genuinely, heartily, openly, earnestly, simply, truly, seriously, unreservedly. ANTONYMS: (adv) dishonestly, affectedly, flippantly, jokingly, untruthfully, unenthusiastically, pretentiously, mildly
sincerity: (adj, n) candor, honesty, integrity, probity, faithfulness; (n) earnestness, heartiness, genuineness, candour, frankness, cordiality. ANTONYMS: (n) dishonesty, hypocrisy, flippancy, frivolity, affectedness, caution, reticence, deceit, doubt
sinful: (adj) wicked, impious, bad, iniquitous, ungodly, depraved, immoral, profane, criminal, wrong, unholy. ANTONYMS: (adj) pious, virtuous, moral, right, pure
sing: (v) hymn, hum, chirp, drone, intone, vocalize, pipe, carol, snitch; (n, v) twitter, squeak
singer: (n) poet, minstrel, crooner, chorister, canary, chanter, warbler, musician, basso, madrigalist, alto
singing: (v) sing; (n) chanting, caroling, crooning, hymnody, humming, intonation, scat, psalmody, harmonization; (adj) cantabile. ANTONYM: (adj) silent
singular: (adj, n) extraordinary; (adj) odd, individual, particular, peculiar, phenomenal, rare, queer, single, quaint, exceptional. ANTONYMS: (adj) ordinary, normal, together,

usual, customary
sink: (n, v) sag, dip; (v) decline, fall, set, descend, drop, fell, subside, settle; (adj, n, v) droop. ANTONYMS: (v) rise, float, improve, increase, recover, drift, ascend, raise
sipping: (n) imbibing, imbibition; (adj) libant
sisterly: (adj) sororal, fatherly, motherly, sisterlike. ANTONYM: (adj) brotherly
sisters: (n) sistren
sixpence: (n) bender, coin, teston, testern
skeleton: (n) carcass, frame, framework, bones, anatomy, scaffold, body, cadaver, chassis, corpse; (n, v) outline
skipping: (n) jumping, leaping, absenteeism; (adv) skippingly, leapingly
skirt: (n, v) border, edge, fringe, hem, flap, verge; (n) brim, kilt, apron; (v) evade, circumvent
skulking: (adj) surreptitious, stealthy, lurking, hiding, clandestine, backstairs, concealed, cowardly; (n) malingering, dodging, evasion
slack: (adj, v) loose, lax, remiss, slow, dull; (adj) indolent, negligent, idle, flaccid, limp, baggy. ANTONYMS: (adj) strict, taut, thorough, brisk, diligent, attentive, upright, prompt, meticulous; (v) tighten; (n) tautness
slacken: (adj, n, v) loosen; (v) abate, remit, retard, loose, douse, lessen, slow, slack up; (adj, v) slack; (n, v) ease. ANTONYMS: (v) tense, increase
slammed: (adj) tight
slanting: (adj) oblique, sloping, diagonal, askew, slanted, aslant, aslope, awry, leaning, sloped; (adj, adv) sideways. ANTONYMS: (adj) upright, direct
sleeping: (adj) asleep, inactive, latent, sleepy, vegetive, vegetative; (n) dormancy, noctambulism, quiescence, quiescency, short sleep. ANTONYMS: (adj) active; (n) waking
sleepy: (adj) drowsy, dozy, slow, lazy, hypnotic, inactive, comatose, dull, heavy, dreamy; (adv) asleep. ANTONYMS: (adj) awake, energetic, vigorous, clear, lively, refreshed
sleeve: (n) arm, liner, cover, cuff, wristband, collar, socket, skin, sheath; (v) plexus, skein
sliding: (n) skating, shifting; (adj) gliding, down, downhill, slippery, labent, descending, downward; (v) to slide
slightest: (adj) minimal, first, smallest amount
slime: (adj) mud, silt; (n) mucus, ooze, phlegm, gook, muck, gunk, goo, filth; (adj, n) sludge
slip: (adj, n, v) lapse, miss; (adj, n) fault, blunder; (n, v) slide, drop, mistake, escape, skid, trip; (n) cutting. ANTONYM: (n) invoice
slippery: (adj, v) precarious; (adj) crafty, glib, elusive, oily, glossy, untrustworthy, wily, unreliable, tricky; (v) questionable. ANTONYMS: (adj) rough, dry, reliable, straight, direct
slipping: (n) skidding, slippage; (adj) slithering, gliding, down, labent
slips: (n) pad
slouched: (adj) slumped
slovenly: (adj) careless, untidy, sloppy, frowzy, dowdy, unkempt, negligent, frowsy, messy, disheveled; (adv) slatternly. ANTONYMS: (adj) clean, neat, diligent
smack: (adv, n, v) slap, bang; (n, v) savor, knock, kiss, hit, buss, wallop; (n) flavor, blow; (adj, n) dash
smacking: (n) smack, brisk, shit, scag, savor, beating, h, savour, diacetylmorphine, heroin, horse
smallest: (adj) least, minimal, littlest, lowest, last, first, negligible, smallest number of, bottom, littler. ANTONYM: (adj) maximum
smarting: (adj) painful, burning, sore; (n) ache, pain, hurting, bite, throbbing, hurt, soreness, sting
smash: (n, v) crash, hit, bang, clash, knock; (v) shatter, crush, mash, break, defeat, ruin. ANTONYMS: (v) mend, preserve; (n) flop
smelling: (n) smell, flavor, scent, olfactory modality, sensing, sense of smell; (adj) redolent, scented, odorous, stinking, rotten
smelt: (v) fuse, temper, anneal, to smelt, distill, refine, heat; (n) sparling, capelan, caplin, capelin
smiling: (adv) smilingly; (adj) bright, cheerful, jolly, joyful, of good cheer, twinkly, fair, sunny; (n) grinning, grin. ANTONYMS: (adj) sad, gloomy
smoking: (n) fume, marijuana, respiration, roll of tobacco, sens; (v) candent, ebullient, glowing; (adj) smoky, rabid; (adv) on a roll
smoothed: (adj) round, smoothened, curved. ANTONYM: (adj) sharp
smoothness: (n) slipperiness, slickness, sleekness, evenness, polish, glossiness, softness, silkiness, grace; (adj, n) elegance, delicacy. ANTONYMS: (n) resistance, unevenness, hesitation, dampness, awkwardness, harshness, hesitancy
snap: (v) bite, nip, snarl; (adj, v) break; (n, v) photograph, fracture, clack, go; (n) pushover, picnic, catch. ANTONYMS: (adj) roundabout, considered
snatch: (n, v) pinch, snap, catch, grip; (v) abduct, clutch, kidnap, seize, jerk, capture, pluck. ANTONYM: (v) release
snatched: (adj) hasty, speedy, brief, hurried, quick, rapid, short, sudden, swift. ANTONYM: (adj) slow
sneering: (adj) contemptuous, disdainful, sarcastic, mocking, snide, scornful, disparaging, disapproving; (n) mockery, disdain; (adv) sneeringly. ANTONYMS: (adj) respectful, admiring
sneeringly: (adv) disdainfully, contemptuously, derisively, superciliously, snidely, scornfully, disrespectfully, condescendingly, sarcastically, sneering
snell: (adj) astute; (n) branch line, leader
snort: (v) snore, huff, inhale; (n, v) snicker, hoot, chuckle, sneer; (n) bird, Bronx cheer, boo, razzing. ANTONYM: (v) exhale
snowy: (adj) white, pure, clean, blank, hoary, achromatic, snow-white, unblemished, wintry, wet, favorite
snuff: (v) smell, kill, douse, slay, scent, snuffle, bump off, smother, snort; (adj) tobacco, nicotine
snug: (adj, v) cosy, trim; (adj) cozy, easy, comfy, tight, close, warm, secure, homely; (v) neat. ANTONYMS: (adj) baggy, uncomfortable, unwelcoming, bleak, formal, loose
soap: (v) bribe, grease, oil, wheedle, cajole, flatter; (n) cleanser, soap opera, sope, soap fire brick, stipend
sober: (adj, v) grave, sedate; (adj) sane, earnest, quiet, solemn, moderate, modest, serene, dull, somber. ANTONYMS: (adj) intoxicated, unrestrained, drunk, playful, sensational, emotional, cheerful, frivolous, funny, muddled, delirious

sobriety: (n) temperance, seriousness, soberness, graveness, abstinence, earnestness, composure, sedateness, staidness; (adj, n) gravity; (adj) rationality. ANTONYMS: (n) excess, drunkenness, flippancy
soften: (adj, v) moderate, mitigate, mollify, assuage, relieve; (v) melt, dull, relent, mute, alleviate; (adj, n, v) palliate. ANTONYMS: (v) harden, solidify, set, congeal, exacerbate, freeze, sharpen, stand, increase
softening: (adj) emollient, salving, relaxing; (v) soften; (adj, n) soothing; (n) maceration, mitigation, easement, mollification, inteneration, encouragement
soldier: (n) warrior, fighter, serviceman, champion, ranker, military personnel, swordsman, trooper, cavalryman, guardsman, janissary
sole: (n) bottom, flounder, base; (adj) single, singular, one, exclusive, individual, only, alone, solitary. ANTONYM: (adj) common
solely: (adj, adv) exclusively, merely, only, alone, barely; (adv) just, but, entirely, wholly, purely, completely
solemn: (adj, n, v) serious; (adj, v) sober, important, sedate, devout, formal, demure; (adj) heavy, dignified, sacred; (adj, n) earnest. ANTONYMS: (adj) frivolous, cheerful, unceremonious, funny, playful, flippant, relaxed
solemnly: (adv) earnestly, gravely, majestically, stately, sternly, staidly, thoughtfully, soberly, formally, ceremoniously, importantly. ANTONYMS: (adv) cheerfully, flippantly
solicited: (adj) requested
solicitously: (adv) considerately, concernedly, carefully, uneasily, kindly, apprehensively, attentively, caringly, politely, jealously, earnestly
solicitude: (n) care, consideration, anxiety, thought, apprehension, regard, attention, fear, disquietude, heed, fret. ANTONYMS: (n) negligence, serenity, thoughtlessness
soliloquy: (n) language, oral communication, apostrophe
solitary: (adj) forlorn, only, alone, single, lonely, lone, sole, unaccompanied, isolated; (adj, n) recluse; (n) hermit. ANTONYMS: (adj) sociable, combined, common, outgoing
solitude: (n) desolation, loneliness, seclusion, privacy, aloneness, isolation, retirement, lonesomeness, retreat, desert, solitariness. ANTONYMS: (n) companionship, closeness
solomon: (n) solon, shining light, Magnus Apollo, magi, luminary, esprit fort, authority, Nestor
solve: (adj, v) interpret, loosen; (v) decipher, dissolve, answer, crack, clear up, riddle, explain, elucidate, decide. ANTONYMS: (v) encode, exacerbate
sooner: (adj, adv) rather, earlier, before, preferably, instead; (adv) first, before now, faster, previously, beforehand; (adj) prior
soothed: (adj) composed
soothing: (adj) calming, soft, smooth, pacifying, quiet, restful, bland, calm, assuasive; (adj, n) softening; (n) alleviation. ANTONYMS: (adj) upsetting, disturbing, hostile, scary, worrying, stimulating, exasperating, annoying, invigorating, painful, intimidating
sore: (adj, n, v) hurt; (adj) sensitive, angry, grievous, raw; (n) injury, lesion, cut, boil; (v) acute; (adj, v) sharp. ANTONYMS: (adj) happy, healthy, pleased, comfortable
sorely: (adv) severely, tenderly, madly, very, greatly, highly, most, distressingly, extremely, hard, sensitively
sorrel: (n) russet buff, shamrock, carroty, goatsfoot, oxalis, murrey, common sorrel, brown, pier, red sorrel, reddish brown
sorrow: (n, v) regret, lament, grieve; (v) mourn; (n) mourning, heartache, repentance, remorse; (adj, n) sadness, misery; (adj, n, v) distress. ANTONYMS: (n) joy, delight, happiness, peace, hopefulness, cheerfulness, shamelessness, calm, content; (v) rejoice
sorrowfully: (adv) dolefully, mournfully, gloomily, woefully, unhappily, sorrily, ruefully, dejectedly, grievously, forlornly, contritely. ANTONYMS: (adv) happily, unrepentantly, joyfully, cheerfully
sowing: (v) plowing, tilling; (n) insemination, semination
spade: (v) grub, delve, scoop, excavate; (n) nigger, coon, nigra, jigaboo, boy, black person, spit
spaniel: (n) sycophant, beagle, harrier, clumber, bootlicker, springer, groveller, gun dog, groveler; (v) snob, lapdog
spar: (n) beam, mast, contention, strife, pole, feldspar; (v) box, fight, bicker, disagree, altercate. ANTONYM: (v) agree
spark: (n, v) flicker, flash, gleam, glint, glitter; (n) light, glimmer, arc, flame, fire; (v) activate
spat: (n, v) squabble, altercation, tiff, bicker, dispute, wrangle, row; (n) gaiter, argument, bickering, fuss. ANTONYM: (n) agreement
speaks: (n) talks
specially: (adv) especially, peculiarly, specifically, extraordinarily, exceptionally, unusually, exclusively, expressly, in particular, particular, distinctively. ANTONYM: (adv) generally
specified: (adj) specific, given, certain, set, appointed, particular, individual, named, assigned, destined, precise
speckle: (n, v) speck, fleck, spot, daub; (n) dapple, freckle, point, blot, maculation, patch; (adj, v) bespeckle
spectators: (n) spectator, gallery, viewer, viewers, attendance
speedily: (adj, adv) quickly, quick, immediately; (adv) rapidly, promptly, hastily, swiftly, fast, apace, hurriedly, fleetly. ANTONYMS: (adv) later, eventually
spider: (n) spiders, tarantula, arachnid, mussuk, chatti, lota, schooner, wedge ring, spinner, star handle, terrine
spinning: (n) rotation, revolution, gyration; (adj) rotary, revolving, rotating, turning, whirling, swirling; (v) rotate, revolve
spirited: (adj) animated, frisky, energetic, racy, bold, gritty, quick, enthusiastic, dashing, peppy, brave. ANTONYMS: (adj) spiritless, lifeless, feeble, cowardly, apathetic, lethargic, spineless, dull, solemn, sluggish, lackluster
spirits: (n) alcohol, booze, humor, frame of mind, liqueur, strong drink, hard drink; (adj) cheer, geniality, good humor; (v) wine
spiritual: (adj) religious, holy, immaterial, incorporeal, pious, ethereal, mental, psychic, divine, metaphysical, unworldly. ANTONYMS: (adj) physical, worldly, secular, earthly, tangible, uncommitted
spirituous: (adj) spiritous, intoxicating, heady

spite: (n) malice, grudge, hatred, malevolence, rancour, venom, rancor, maliciousness, ill will, animosity; (n, v) pique. ANTONYMS: (v) please; (n) benevolence, goodwill, love, affection, harmony
spiteful: (adj) malicious, malevolent, sinister, nasty, malignant, venomous, despiteful, ill-natured, vindictive, cruel, hateful. ANTONYMS: (adj) benevolent, harmless, merciful, kindhearted, friendly, pleasant, loving, benign, generous, gentle, flattering
splashed: (adj) dabbled, bespattered, besplashed, spattered, marked, unclean, dirty, splattered, distributed, showy, dotted
spoil: (n, v) ruin; (v) rot, corrupt, mar, deface, sack; (adj, v) impair, damage, injure, harm, indulge. ANTONYMS: (v) improve, conserve, enliven, help, abuse, beautify, deny, neglect, correct, respect, clean
spoiling: (n) spoilage, spoilation, despoliation, deterioration, detriment, erosion, indulgence, injury; (v) withering; (adj) easy, lenient
sponging: (n) shrinking, bath; (adj) scrounging, bloodsucking, freeloading, leechlike
spontaneity: (n) abandon, freedom, voluntariness, unaffectedness, suddenness, energy, recklessness, impetuosity, facility, hastiness, rashness. ANTONYMS: (n) deliberation, affectedness
spoon: (n) spoonful, ladle, shovel, soup spoon, tablespoon, trowel, teaspoon, dipper; (v) smooch, dally, bill and coo
sporting: (adj) fair, sportsmanlike, clean, gambling, betting, dissipated, athletic, adventurous, sporty; (v) tauromachy; (n) diversion. ANTONYM: (adj) unsporting
spots: (n) damp, drifter, floater, floating policy, muscae volitantes, Musca volitans
spotted: (adj) mottled, speckled, dappled, piebald, blotchy, dotted, flyblown, multicolored, stained, spotty, flecked. ANTONYM: (adj) uniform
sprig: (n) branch, scion, twig, spray, bough, limb, sprout, staff, shillelah, bludgeon, brier
springe: (n) springle
springing: (v) jumping, climbing, bounding, furious, conspicuous, prominent, ascending, projecting outwardly; (n) growth, suspension, emanation
sprinkle: (v) splash, drizzle, moisten, cast, dot, spatter, spray, spill; (adj, v) besprinkle; (n, v) dash, rain
sprinkling: (n) sprinkle, scattering, touch, aspersion, smack, spray, bit, scatter, watering; (adj, n) spice; (adj) drop
spun: (adj) spined; (v) rotate, revolve
squandered: (adj) wasted, dissipated, emaciated, devastated, dissolute, diminished, desolated, desolate, cadaverous; (v) bewildered, employed ineffectually
squares: (n) square
squeezing: (n) constriction, compression, pressure, squeeze, crushing, compressing, expulsion, extrusion, distress, power play; (v) expression
squire: (n, v) escort; (n) landlord, gallant, attendant, beau, gentleman, esquire, landowner, landholder, armiger; (v) attend
stagger: (adj, adv, v) startle; (v) astonish, reel, shock, hobble, shake, flounder, totter; (n, v) lurch, pitch; (adj, v) flabbergast
stake: (n, v) risk, chance, venture, bet, wager, post, pole, gamble, support; (n) interest, shaft
stakes: (n) stake, ante, wager, kitty, jackpot, pool, pot, gamble, prize, interest, fence
stalk: (n) stem, shank; (v) pursue, walk, march, follow, shadow, tail, track, trail, hunt
stamp: (n, v) print, imprint, mark, seal, brand, impress, cast, punch, shape; (v) trample; (n) impression
stamping: (n) impression, blocking, coin, postage, stamping of rail
starched: (adj) formal, starch, punctilious, ceremonious, majestic, solemn, inflexible, prim, stately, severe, ritual
stare: (n, v) gaze, look; (v) gape, glare, peer, squint, goggle, see, outface; (n) regard, contemplation. ANTONYM: (v) glance
starlight: (n) rushlight, moonlight, firelight, candlelight
startled: (adj) dumbfounded, dismayed, distressed, aghast, frightened, astonished, amazed, terrified, afraid, shocked, astounded
startling: (adj) wonderful, shocking, surprising, striking, alarming, appalling, marvellous, dramatic, frightful, sensational, lurid. ANTONYMS: (adj) unremarkable, soothing, comforting
starved: (adj) famished, starving, ravenous, meager, emaciated, malnourished, thin, esurient, hungerly, lean, starveling. ANTONYM: (adj) healthy
starving: (adj) famished, hungry, malnourished, voracious, skinny, undernourished, thin, empty, peckish; (adj, v) starved; (n) starvation. ANTONYMS: (adj) satiated, healthy
stately: (adj) solemn, imposing, elegant; (adj, v) noble, dignified, grand, proud, great; (adj, adv) regal, majestic, royal. ANTONYMS: (adj) boisterous, humble, modest, lowly
stating: (n) reference
stationary: (adj) motionless, fixed, set, quiescent, permanent, immobile, steady, static, constant, unmoving, still. ANTONYMS: (adj) mobile, shifting, flowing
statue: (n) figure, monument, statuette, effigy, idol, sculpture, carving, bust, sphinx, icon, representation
steadily: (adv) constantly, stably, regularly, fixedly, strongly, continually, steadfastly, uniformly, tightly, calmly, determinedly. ANTONYMS: (adv) unsteadily, nervously, loosely, weakly, rapidly, suddenly, excitedly, haphazardly, inconsistently, unevenly
steady: (adj, v) steadfast, even, secure, resolute, regular, calm, sedate; (adj, adv) stable; (adj) constant, continual, fixed. ANTONYMS: (adj) shaky, wobbly, intermittent, unreliable, irregular, fluctuating, inconsistent, unbalanced, unstable, unfaithful; (adv) unsteadily
steal: (v) purloin, abstract, sneak, filch, pinch, creep, misappropriate, rob, pilfer; (n) bargain; (n, v) snatch
stealing: (n) pilferage, larceny, theft, steal, burglary, misappropriation, embezzlement, stolen, thievery, pilfering, thieving
steaming: (adj) hot, sweltering, roasting, baking, hot under the collar, hazy, scorching; (adv) piping; (n) fumigation
stepped: (v) advanced, gone, stopen
stewing: (n) simmering, boiling, agitation, cooking, cookery; (adj) sweltering
sticks: (n) backwoods, firewood,

frontier, outskirts, suburb, town, wilderness, brushwood, high sticks; (adj) distant

stiff: (adj) hard, formal, inflexible, difficult, rigorous, numb, firm, sturdy; (adj, n) stark, severe; (n) corpse. ANTONYMS: (adj) soft, supple, flexible, floppy, pliable, free, easy, loose, informal, mild, pliant

stiffly: (adv) firmly, stiff, awkwardly, unbendingly, difficultly, woodenly, strongly, formally, stringently, clumsily, strictly. ANTONYM: (adv) loosely

stifling: (adj) close, oppressive, sweltering, stuffy, heavy, hot, torrid, sticky; (n) crushing, quelling, suppression. ANTONYMS: (adj) fresh, airy, cool, temperate

stile: (n) bar, flight of stairs, upright, vertical, step, barrier, montant

stillness: (n) hush, calmness, immobility, serenity, silence, quietness, peacefulness; (adj, n) calm, quiet, peace, still. ANTONYMS: (n) bustle, movement, uproar, motion, turbulence, turmoil, vigor, disturbance, chaos, agitation

stimulus: (n) provocation, encouragement, spur, motivation, inducement, stimulation, stimulant, impulse, inspiration, urge, goad. ANTONYMS: (n) deterrent, discouragement, disincentive

stir: (adj, n, v) move, bustle; (v) rouse, arouse, affect, agitate, inspire; (adj, n) movement; (n) commotion, excitement, disturbance. ANTONYMS: (v) dampen, retire, stultify, bore, steady, stifle, suppress; (n) quiet, peace; (n, v) calm

stirred: (adj) excited, agitated, moved, affected, aroused, emotional, aflame, Stirn, horny, susceptible, stirred up

stirring: (adj) lively, exciting, alive, rousing, spirited, touching, thrilling, active; (n) agitation; (v) eventful, brisk. ANTONYMS: (adj) depressing, boring, inactive, dull, conciliatory, asleep, uninspiring, unimpressive; (n) suppression

stirrup: (n) support, brace, clip, shoe, sole, splint, sprit, stirrup iron, rod, suspension strap, stilts

stole: (n) wrap, stolen, scarf, stolon, stealing, robe, alb, tunicle, surplice, alba, cassock

stooped: (adj) hunched, stoop, stooping, crooked, bended, not straight, inclined, not erect, arched, asymmetrical, droopy

stooping: (adj) hunched, crooked, asymmetrical, not erect, not straight, corrupt; (n) patronage

stopping: (n) stoppage, cessation, shutdown, padding, fillet, suspension, stay, discontinuance, abeyance, interruption; (adv) haltingly

stores: (n) provisions, materials, provender, support, equipment, military issue, government issue, goods, food, commissariat

storming: (n) assault, storm, night raid, beginning, sortie, onset, bravado; (adj) tempestuous, angry, stormy, turbulent

stout: (adj, n) sturdy, stocky, hearty; (adj) hardy, strong, robust, obese, husky, bold, corpulent, fleshy. ANTONYMS: (adj) thin, slim, flimsy, cowardly, slight, skinny, fragile, weak

straggling: (adj) rambling, straggly, spread, few, trailing, untidy, vagabond, sprawly, sprawled. ANTONYM: (adj) compact

strain: (n, v) stretch, sift; (adj, n, v) tax; (v) screen, filter, try, exert; (n) effort, breed, exertion, song. ANTONYMS: (v) laze; (n) ease, relief

straining: (n) effort, push, exertion, distortion, overrefinement, tension, endeavor, torture, twisting; (adj) arduous; (v) tighten

strangely: (adv) curiously, queerly, unusually, funnily, peculiarly, weirdly, marvelously, uncommonly, extraordinarily, singularly, bizarrely. ANTONYMS: (adv) typically, ordinarily, harmoniously

strangers: (n) stranger

strap: (n, v) lash, whip; (n) strop, leash, rein, shoulder strap, band, bar; (v) bind, flog; (adj, n) tie. ANTONYM: (v) untie

strapped: (adj) impecunious, poor, penniless, late, poverty-stricken, short of money, impoverished, destitute, insolvent, indigent

strapping: (adj) brawny, burly, lusty, beefy, husky, powerful, robust, hefty, stout, strong; (n) strap. ANTONYMS: (adj) puny, weak, frail, feeble, delicate, slim

straw: (n) rush, stalk, drinking straw, chaff, fig, bran; (adj) feather, cobweb, mote, gossamer; (v) strew

stream: (adj, n, prep, v) current, course; (n, prep, v) flood; (n, v) brook, run, crowd, jet, gush; (n) river; (v) pour, swarm. ANTONYMS: (n) shortage; (v) drizzle

streaming: (adj) flowing, flapping, detached, incoherent, baggy, slack, relaxed, loose, lax; (n) cyclosis; (v) disheveled

stretch: (adj, n, v) strain; (adj, v) extend, elongate, lengthen; (n) extent, expanse; (v) prolong, draw; (n, v) run, spread, range. ANTONYMS: (v) shorten, shrink, withdraw, narrow, relax; (adj) inflexible

stretched: (adj) extended, stiff, tight, tense, stretched out, strained, expanded, outstretched, elongated, outspread, prolonged. ANTONYMS: (adj) loose, short

stretches: (adj) stretched

stretching: (n) tension, stretch, expansion, workout, reach, amplification, stretchiness, enlargement; (adj) stretched, long; (v) extend

stricken: (adj) smitten, struck, beaten, laid low, affected, hurt, low, impaired, dotty; (v) heavy laden, victimized

strict: (adj) severe, stern, rigid, correct, austere, rigorous, harsh, scrupulous; (adj, v) exact, accurate, precise. ANTONYMS: (adj) lenient, lax, free, negligent, imprecise, flexible, relaxed, loose, gentle, inaccurate, liberal

strictly: (adv) rigorously, severely, exactly, correctly, stringently, sternly, rigidly, precisely, closely, literally, harshly. ANTONYMS: (adv) loosely, leniently, lightheartedly, negligently, inaccurately, unlawfully, falsely, amenably

striking: (adj) outstanding, dramatic, spectacular, salient, imposing, conspicuous, vivid, remarkable, notable, astonishing; (n) strike. ANTONYMS: (adj) ugly, ordinary, unimpressive, unremarkable, inconspicuous, unattractive, uninteresting, plain, insignificant, humble, obscure

strip: (v) deprive, despoil, peel, rifle, plunder, divest, denude, ransack, pillage; (n) band, slip. ANTONYMS: (v) decorate, cover, add

strive: (v) endeavor, contend, contest, struggle, fight, attempt, combat, strain, work, aspire, aim

striving: (n) nisus, pains, endeavor, strife, try, strain, attempt, strive,

ambition, struggle, exertion. ANTONYM: (adj) unmotivated
stroke: (adj, n) blow; (n, v) touch, caress, mark, buffet, lick, pat; (n) beat, hit, knock, bang
strokes: (n) approval, reward, recognition, prize, acclaim, credit, brownie points
stroking: (v) caress, strike, blow; (n) cam stroke, feeling, effleurage, diagonal, CVA, commendation, glide, slash
stroll: (n, v) ramble, saunter, walk, amble, wander, promenade, tramp, hike; (v) roam, go for a walk, range
struck: (adj, v) smitten; (v) stroke; (adj) affected, afflicted, doting, dotty, enamored, gaga, hurt, in love, infatuated
struggling: (v) strive; (adj) harassed, hostile, under pressure, stressed, aggressive, agonizing, rebellious, belligerent, careworn; (n) colluctation
stuck: (adj) stranded, jammed, delayed, fast; (adj, adv) aground; (n) stuck ware, thrust, sticking; (v) sticked, fasten, attach. ANTONYMS: (adj) unstuck, loose
stunned: (adj) dumbfounded, astonished, astounded, amazed, flabbergasted, dazed, stupefied, staggered, bewildered, confused; (adj, v) astonied. ANTONYMS: (adj) indifferent, unimpressed
stupefied: (adj) stunned, amazed, astonished, bewildered, astounded, dumbfounded, stupid, confused, flabbergasted, dumfounded, groggy. ANTONYMS: (adj) precise, unimpressed
subdued: (adj) quiet, muffled, dull, restrained, muted, tame, faint, repressed, low, meek; (adj, v) resigned. ANTONYMS: (adj) enthusiastic, lively, uninhibited, unsubdued, rebellious, noisy, bright, elaborate, frivolous, upbeat
subsiding: (n) settling, subsidence, remission, remittal, cave in, sinking; (adj) decreasing
subsisting: (adj) extant, living
substance: (adj, n) subject; (n) body, significance, import, material, matter, meaning, amount, means, gist, core. ANTONYMS: (n) meaninglessness, lightness, surface
substitute: (n) deputy, backup, delegate; (n, v) alternate, shift, surrogate; (adj, n) alternative, makeshift; (v) change, replace, fill in
subterfuge: (adj, n) quibble; (n) excuse, pretense, deception, ruse, dodge, evasion, pretext, blind, artifice; (n, v) shift
subtle: (adj) delicate, sharp, nice, acute, astute, insidious, exquisite, elusive; (adj, v) shrewd, sly, crafty. ANTONYMS: (adj) loud, bright, considerable, tactless, overpowering, harsh, concrete, dark
subtraction: (n) minus, withdrawal, reduction, diminution, discount, tax deduction, abatement; (n, v) addition, multiplication, division; (v) subtract. ANTONYMS: (n) addition, estimation, credit
succession: (n) series, run, round, chain, string, lineage, row, continuation, concatenation, course, reversion
successive: (adj) consecutive, sequential, serial, following, succeeding, subsequent, sequent, consequent, ensuing, continuous, next. ANTONYM: (adj) preceding
successor: (n) heir, inheritor, beneficiary, offspring, replacement, progeny, sequel, scion, alternate, heritor, succeeder. ANTONYMS: (n) forerunner, precursor, predecessor, ancestor
suds: (n, v) foam, froth, spume; (n) lather, soapsuds, bubbles, head, beer, bubble, lager, surf
sufferer: (n) victim, martyr, prey, casualty, invalid, depressive, diseased person, sick person, rheumatic, diabetic, neurotic
suffice: (v) satisfy, do, answer, content, fulfill, be sufficient, qualify, function, be enough, suit, fulfil
sufficiently: (adv) fully, satisfactorily, enough, amply, quite, properly, competently, decently, abundantly, goodly, completely. ANTONYM: (adv) inadequately
suggesting: (n) proposal; (adj) symptomatic of, insinuating, suggestive of
suggestive: (adj, v) expressive; (adj) obscene, spicy, allusive, graphic, smutty, significative, narrative, meaningful, epic, implicative
suicide: (n) harikari, killer, suttee, putting to death, Juggernaut, assisted suicide, slayer; (adj) suicidal
suitably: (adv) appropriately, fittingly, befittingly, properly, fitly, becomingly, accordingly, decently, correctly, aptly; (adv, v) conveniently. ANTONYMS: (adv) inappropriately, unsuitably, inconveniently, incorrectly, unreasonably, wrongly, inadequately, badly, indecently, unduly
suited: (adj, v) proper, fit, fitted, adapted, convenient; (adj) appropriate, good, apt, eligible, capable, useful. ANTONYMS: (adj) incompatible, wrong, inappropriate
sullenly: (adv) sulkily, sourly, grumpily, morosely, moodily, dourly, somberly, peevishly, surly, crossly, petulantly. ANTONYMS: (adv) graciously, contentedly, gladly, cheerily
sullenness: (n) glumness, moroseness, moodiness, resentment, sourness, gloominess, brusqueness, sulk, gloom, doggedness, mumps. ANTONYM: (n) cheeriness
summit: (n) peak, apex, acme, top, height, crown, point, crest, tip, climax, culmination. ANTONYMS: (n) nadir, bottom, dip, trough
summon: (v) assemble, convene, demand, ask, invoke, evoke, invite, muster, page, rally, convoke. ANTONYM: (v) disband
summons: (n) call, invitation, bidding, process, writ, invocation, warrant, command; (n, v) summon; (v) demand, cite
sunk: (adj) sunken, undone, finished, ruined, profound, immersed, damaged, lowed, lying flat; (v) cut up, dashed
sunlight: (n) sunshine, daylight, the sun, positive, solar, sunbeam, brightness, sunbeams, rays, shaft, beam
sunny: (adj) bright, clear, gay, cheerful, merry, blithe, shiny, shining, radiant, brilliant, fair. ANTONYMS: (adj) overcast, dull, shady, unhappy, cloudy, sad, miserable, gloomy, unpleasant
sunset: (n) dusk, sundown, nightfall, twilight, night, sunsetting, periodic event, crepuscule, atmospheric phenomenon, hour, recurrent event. ANTONYMS: (n) sunrise, daybreak
sunshine: (n) sunlight, sun, day, light, fair weather, gladness, shine, glee, sunbeam, delight, brightness
superfluous: (adj, v) spare; (adj) needless, extra, excess, excessive, unnecessary, surplus, pointless, superabundant, supernumerary, supererogatory. ANTONYMS: (adj) indispensable, important, essential, basic, pertinent
superiority: (n) predominance, priority, excellence, mastery,

precedence, preference, distinction, supremacy, domination, eminence; (adj, n) odds. ANTONYMS: (n) humility, weakness, friendliness, mediocrity, simplicity

superlatively: (adv) perfectly, preeminently, excellently, matchlessly, extremely, outstandingly, splendidly, magnificently, consummately, brilliantly, absolutely

superstition: (n) superstitious, taboo, religion, old wives' tale, superstitious notion, lore, folklore, fanaticism, fallacy, belief, magic. ANTONYMS: (n) science, truth

superstitious: (adj) superstition, false, groundless, eerie, irrational, fallacious

supper: (n) meal, tea, lunch, repast, reception, mealtime, siesta, social affair; (v) dejeuner, bever, whet

supplied: (n) supplying; (adj) adequate, ample, copious, complete, fitted, impregnated, made pregnant, offered, perfect, plenteous. ANTONYM: (adj) unavailable

supporting: (n) backing, shoring, propping up, hanging; (adj) auxiliary, collateral, encouraging, secondary, supplementary; (adj, prep) behind; (v) uphold. ANTONYMS: (prep) against; (adj) secondary

supports: (n) ropes, chains, rigging

supposing: (adv) admitting, conditionally, in case; (n) supposition, conjecture, thought, theory, assumption; (conj) although, what if; (v) suppose

suppress: (v) subdue, silence, quell, check, stifle, restrain, subjugate, curb, crush, strangle, oppress. ANTONYMS: (v) encourage, stimulate, incite, expose, declare, resist, confess, divulge, surrender, advertise, acknowledge

suppressed: (adj) stifled, smothered, strangled, repressed, downtrodden, buried, hidden, pent-up, latent, untold; (n) subordinate. ANTONYMS: (adj) publicized, overt

suppression: (n) repression, restraint, quelling, crushing, stifling, constraint, extinction, abolition, subjugation, prevention; (n, v) overthrow. ANTONYMS: (n) emancipation, development, expression, revelation

supremely: (adv) sovereignly, perfectly, preeminently, utmostly, principally, extremely, greatly, paramountly, ideally, uppermostly, ultimately

surmise: (n, v) guess; (v) suppose, suspect, presume, imagine, divine, doubt; (n) hypothesis, supposition, speculation, assumption. ANTONYMS: (n) knowledge, measurement

surplice: (n) robe, Geneva gown frock, gown, pallium

surplus: (n) remainder, balance, overabundance, surfeit, remnant, glut, overflow, plethora; (adj, adv, n) extra; (adj) superfluous; (adj, adv) over. ANTONYMS: (adj, n) lack; (n) shortage, scarcity, shortfall, lacking, essential, deficit; (adj) need, basic, want, necessity

surprisingly: (adv) astonishingly, unexpectedly, marvelously, unusually, remarkably, oddly, astoundingly, startlingly, suddenly; (adj, adv) wonderfully, strangely. ANTONYMS: (adv) unsurprisingly, frequently, predictably

surrounded: (adj) enclosed, ingirt, not independent, ringed, inside, rooted, conditioned, circumstanced, bounded; (v) beset, furnished

surrounding: (prep) round, about; (adj) encompassing, encircling, environmental, circumambient, adjoining; (adv) around; (n) surroundings, circumstances, enclosing

susceptibility: (n) sensitivity, liability, impressibility, inclination, capability, sensibility, susceptibleness, receptivity, responsiveness, proclivity, tendency. ANTONYMS: (n) resistance, insensitivity

susceptible: (adj) impressionable, receptive, sensitive, subject, liable, delicate, susceptive, vulnerable, pliable, irritable, open. ANTONYMS: (adj) resistant, impervious, resisting, safe, invulnerable, indifferent, smart

suspected: (adj) supposed, doubted, suspicious, suspicion, inspiring distrust, distrusted

suspended: (adj) hanging, dormant, pendulous, abeyant, dangling, in abeyance, inactive, pendant, in suspension, pensile, suspensory

suspense: (n) doubt, expectancy, anticipation, indecision, insecurity, unrest, expectation, irresolution, suspension, tension; (adj, n) hesitation. ANTONYM: (n) knowledge

suspension: (n) interruption, break, recess, respite, pause, intermission, abeyance, suspense, adjournment, postponement, reprieve. ANTONYMS: (n) continuation, completion, finish, inauguration

suspicion: (n) distrust, inkling, misgiving, hunch, qualm, scruple, surmise, supposition; (n, v) doubt, mistrust, fear. ANTONYMS: (n) certainty, knowledge, information, carelessness, recklessness, certitude

suspicions: (adj) entertain doubts, have doubts; (n) doubts, misgivings, reservations, qualms, worries, fears, uncertainties

suspicious: (adj) questionable, distrustful, shady, queer, doubtful, dubious, incredulous, fishy, funny, jealous, mistrustful. ANTONYMS: (adj) gullible, trustworthy, aggressive, aboveboard, certain, unsuspecting, unquestionable, believable, straight, palpable, innocent

swagger: (n, v) strut, prance; (adj, n, v) bluster; (v) boast, show off, parade, ruffle, flourish; (adj, v) bully; (adj) groovy; (n) bragging

swaggering: (adj) hectoring, swashbuckling, supercilious, sniffy, boastful, lordly, disdainful, prideful; (v) swagger; (n) boasting, bravado. ANTONYM: (adj) insecure

swallowing: (adj) absorptive, unsuspecting, absorbent, absorbing; (n) consumption

swallows: (n) sparrows, rooks, robins, Passeriformes, Hirundinidae, etc, order Passeriformes

swarthy: (adj) dusky, black, swart, sable, somber, dun, tawny, coloured, colored, atramentous; (n) brunette. ANTONYMS: (adj) fair, light

swayed: (adj) persuaded, susceptible, touched, convinced. ANTONYM: (adj) doubtful

swear: (v) declare, assure, assert, affirm, curse, pledge; (n, v) promise, avow, depone, depose, aver. ANTONYMS: (v) distrust, refute, deny, compliment

swearing: (n) curse, expletive, profanity, oath, abuse, blasphemy, swearword, execration, adjuration, asseveration; (v) swear

sweetened: (adj) sugared, syrupy, perfumed, scented, seraphic, sickly, sugary, sweet as sugar, tasty, angelic, palatable

sweet-smelling: (adj) aromatic, fragrant, sweet, odorous

swell: (n, v) rise, heave, increase, wave, billow; (v) enlarge, expand, puff, grow, bloat; (adj, n) dandy. ANTONYMS: (v) deflate, desiccate, shrink, compress, concentrate, wane; (n, v) decline; (adj) bad, horrible, shabby, awful

swelling: (n) protuberance, lump, swell, intumescence, growth, projection, prominence, bulge, dropsy; (adj, v) inflated; (adj) growing. ANTONYM: (n) decline

swept: (adj) clean

swiftly: (adv) rapidly, speedily, fleetly, promptly, expeditiously, alertly, hastily, suddenly, readily; (adj, adv) quickly, fast. ANTONYMS: (adv) eventually, sluggishly, gradually

swinging: (adj) swaying, excessive, lilting, inordinate, hanging, exorbitant, pendulous, outrageous, preposterous, extravagant; (n) slewing

sword: (n) blade, sabre, brand, broadsword, falchion, cutlass, saber, steel, glaive, backsword, cutlas

symbol: (n) emblem, number, badge, mark, stamp, numeral, type, insignia, token, image, indication

symbols: (n) secret language, secret code, script, code, cipher, cryptogram

sympathetic: (adj, v) compassionate, tender, affectionate; (adj, n) kindly, congenial, humane, gentle, favorable; (adj) merciful, agreeable, friendly. ANTONYMS: (adj) hardhearted, unfeeling, callous, uncaring, unsociable, unforgiving, unfriendly, negative, sarcastic, opposed, unhelpful

sympathetically: (adv) compassionately, tenderly, considerately, agreeably, favorably, sensitively, caringly, benevolently, thoughtfully, mercifully, humanely. ANTONYMS: (adv) meanly, thoughtlessly, unfeelingly, severely, unkindly, roughly, negatively, disapprovingly, cruelly, tactlessly

sympathy: (n) compassion, kindness, commiseration, mercy, feeling, understanding, rapport, benevolence, agreement; (adj, n) humanity, charity. ANTONYMS: (n) indifference, cruelty, coldness, disdain, incompatibility, thoughtlessness, mercilessness, callousness, incomprehension, inhumanity, insensitivity

tacit: (adj) silent, implicit, understood, implied, undeclared, unspoken, voiceless, mute, mum; (n) tace; (v) not expressed. ANTONYMS: (adj) spoken, express

tact: (n) diplomacy, delicacy, finesse, address, discretion, skill, consideration, refinement, grace, thoughtfulness, tactfulness. ANTONYMS: (n) frankness, carelessness, thoughtlessness, insensitivity, clumsiness

tail: (n, v) shadow, trail; (v) follow, track, pursue, dog, tag, chase; (n) behind, posterior, butt. ANTONYMS: (n, v) head, front; (v) lead

tailor: (v) sew, fashion, shape, accommodate, design, cut, adjust, fit; (n) snip, dressmaker, sartor

tailoring: (n) dressmaking, adapt, rag trade, craft, customization, equipage, foppery, frippery, man millinery, couture, millinery

tails: (n) dress suit, tail coat, full dress, tail, waste, evening dress, dress coat, coat, morning coat, cutaway, formalwear

tale: (n) account, narrative, narration, recital, fib, fable, report, fiction, lie, relation, yarn. ANTONYM: (n) fact

talents: (adj) talent, ability, capacity, parts, ingenuity, cleverness, turn; (n) faculty, endowment, genius, accomplishment

tallow: (n) grease, lard, oil, suet, cream, butter, cicatrix, beef tallow, dubbin, animal oil, scar

tapped: (adj) poor, powerless, helpless. ANTONYM: (adj) untapped

tapping: (n) draining of the furnace, paracentesis, to tap, tick, tapotement, sound, patter, drainage, clapping, casting, restriking

tasting: (n) degustation, gustation, savoring, relishing, sample, gustatory sensation, gustatory perception, discernment, drinking, eating, feeding

temper: (adj, v) moderate, soften, mitigate, harden; (n) character, disposition, humor, nature; (v) modify, season, qualify. ANTONYMS: (n, v) upset; (v) soften, agitate, excite, flex, bend, increase; (n) composure, happiness, wrath, equanimity

temptation: (n, v) lure, enticement, bait; (n) attraction, allurement, invitation, seduction, inducement, allure, appeal, pull. ANTONYMS: (n) dislike, discouragement

tempting: (adj) seductive, alluring, attractive, enticing, tantalizing, charming, appealing, captivating, beguiling, delicious, irresistible. ANTONYMS: (adj) repulsive, revolting, unattractive, repellent

tenacity: (n) persistence, determination, resolution, doggedness, resolve, pertinacity, strength, persistency, fortitude, firmness; (adj) obstinacy. ANTONYMS: (n) indifference, slackness, weakness, cowardice, flexibility, indecision

tenant: (n) lodger, resident, lessee, inhabitant, renter, leaseholder, occupier, holder, inmate; (v) occupy, inhabit. ANTONYM: (n) proprietor

tender: (n, v) offer, proffer, bid; (adj, v) affectionate; (adj) painful, sensitive, soft, loving, sore; (v) propose, present. ANTONYMS: (adj) hardhearted, rubbery, hard, rough, uncaring, healthy, mature, unfeeling, cold, experienced; (v) withdraw

tenderly: (adv) softly, kindly, delicately, affectionately, fondly, warmly, painfully, sensitively, caringly, sympathetically, gently. ANTONYMS: (adv) roughly, severely, disapprovingly, harshly

tenderness: (n) fondness, soreness, love, affection, sympathy; (adj, n) clemency, mildness, compassion, gentleness, softness, delicacy. ANTONYMS: (n) pleasure, dryness, hatred, strength, detachment

tending: (n) care, hairdressing, aid, treatment, attention, babysitting, incubation; (adj) apt, conducive, prone, disposed

terrier: (n) cairn, bullterrier, ratter, rat terrier, piercer, Lhasa, fox terrier, stylet, hunting dog, perforator, schnauzer

terrifying: (adj) horrible, frightening, alarming, fearsome, scary, horrifying, terrific, appalling, formidable, ghastly, hideous. ANTONYMS: (adj) safe, pleasant, reassuring

terror: (n, v) alarm, scare; (adj, n) dread, awe; (n) fear, dismay, consternation, horror, panic, apprehension, scourge. ANTONYMS: (n) peace, security, delight, calm, confidence

tested: (adj) experienced, valid, tried and true, qualified, veteran, proven, proved, hardened, genuine, faithful, dependable. ANTONYM: (adj)

inexperienced
testimony: (n, v) attestation, witness; (n) declaration, proof, evidence, testimonial, confirmation, statement, affidavit, affirmation, profession
thankful: (adj) appreciative, indebted, beholden, obliged, contented, pleased, gratified, relieved, under obligation, appreciatory, welcome. ANTONYMS: (adj) worried, unappreciative, unthankful, sorry
thatch: (n) thatching, roof, Edward thatch, teach, ceiling, Blackbeard, tile, sea rover, roofing material, sea robber, hair
thaw: (v) fuse, dissolve, warm, unfreeze, soften, liquefy, defrost, run, liquify; (n) melting, thawing. ANTONYMS: (v) cool, chill, congeal
theology: (adj, n) divinity, God, deity; (n) apologetics, homiletics, hermeneutics, religion, theological system, eschatology, field of study, subject field
therein: (adv) in this, in there
thereof: (adv) thence, therefrom, therefore, hence; (adj) casual, intelligence, observer, occasional, prearranged, premeditated, fortuitous
thereupon: (adv) hereupon, next, then, immediately, therefore, therewith, in the sequel, close upon, upon which, whereupon, accordingly
thickly: (adv) deeply, heavily, thick, viscously, thicksetly, solidly, dully, dumbly, compactly, closely, turbidly. ANTONYMS: (adv) thinly, finely, slightly, sparsely, loosely, distinctly
thief: (n) burglar, bandit, pirate, plunderer, filcher, stealer, pickpocket, pilferer, crook, brigand, despoiler
thirst: (n, v) hunger, lust, wish; (n) longing, yen, craving, hankering, dryness, appetite; (v) starve, crave. ANTONYM: (n) dislike
thorn: (n) barb, prickle, bramble, spike, point, brier, pricker, needle, sticker, fang; (adj, n) sting
thorough: (adj) complete, full, profound, exhaustive, absolute, good, comprehensive, detailed, extensive, sweeping, careful. ANTONYMS: (adj) partial, sketchy, careless, slack, imperfect, sloppy, rushed, restricted, inadequate, halfhearted, dense
thoroughly: (adv, v) fully; (adv) entirely, totally, soundly, exhaustively, carefully, absolutely, perfectly, deeply, utterly, exactly. ANTONYMS: (adv) superficially, incompletely, negligently, partially, partly, barely, halfheartedly, deficiently, inadequately, insufficiently, hastily
thou: (n) chiliad, grand, m, g, one thousand, gramme, gram, gm, gigabyte, Gb, curtilage
thoughtfulness: (n) kindness, tact, deliberation, attentiveness, contemplativeness, attention, introspection, meditation, pensiveness, reflection, reflexion. ANTONYMS: (n) thoughtlessness, carelessness, cruelty, rashness, unthoughtfulness, inconsideration, unkindness, selfishness, insensitivity, neglect, cheerfulness
thread: (n) screw thread, yarn, rope, wire, twine, ligature; (adj, n, v) line, file; (n, v) string together; (adj, v) range; (v) penetrate
threaten: (v) intimidate, loom, bully, endanger, offer, imperil, jeopardize, peril, foreshadow, portend; (n, v) threat. ANTONYMS: (v) guard, protect, relieve, save, alleviate, reassure, recede, strengthen
threatening: (adj) ominous, forbidding, sinister, minatory, black, imminent, perilous, impending, dangerous, grave, sullen. ANTONYMS: (adj) reassuring, nice, approachable, pleasant, promising, favorable, friendly, harmless, hospitable, soothing
thrill: (n, v) delight, shudder, quiver, shiver; (v) excite, exhilarate, exalt, stir; (n) shake, excitement, chill. ANTONYMS: (v) dishearten, discourage, disappoint, displease; (n) depression, calm, boredom, agony, sorrow; (n, v) bore
throb: (n, v) quiver, ache, pulse, pound, thrill, tingle; (v) pulsate, palpitate, flutter, shudder; (n) pulsation
throstle: (n) song thrush, thrush, flyer eye
throttle: (v) choke, asphyxiate, strangulate, smother, scrag, constrain, stifle, suffocate, restrain, cumber; (n) accelerator
thrust: (n, v) poke, stab, jab, drive, shove, force, punch, boost, cast, dig; (v) ram. ANTONYM: (n) inertia
thrusting: (n) thrust, push, jab, poke, jabbing, stab, driving force, scoke, sack, punch, Phytolacca Americana
thumb: (v) feel, flip, handle, leaf, touch, flick, hitch, riff; (n) pollex, bull nose, forefinger
thunder: (adj, n, v) boom; (n, v) roar, bang, roll, bellow; (adj, n) peal; (adj, v) explode, detonate; (v) howl, rumble, fulminate
thyme: (n) herb, rosemary, sage, herbaceous plant, parsley, creeping thyme, common thyme, basil, aromatic plant, pot herbs
tide: (n, v) wave, flood, surge; (n) stream, flow, course, drift, time, high tide, run, piping times. ANTONYM: (v) ebb
tidy: (adj, v) clean, trim; (adj) spruce, shipshape, respectable, natty; (v) clear, straighten, clear up, clean up, arrange. ANTONYMS: (adj) knotted, disheveled, disorganized, messy, slovenly, hairy, unsubstantial, dense; (v) litter, disorganize, disorder
tied: (adj) bound, connected, laced, united, fixed, even, liable, tight, spiked, responsible, attached. ANTONYMS: (adj) untied, unlaced
tight: (adj, v) narrow, parsimonious, compact, stingy; (adj, adv, v) fast, firm; (adj) mean, taut, secure, snug, tense. ANTONYMS: (adj) generous, baggy, slack, wide, easy, open, leaky, giving, free, floppy; (adv) loosely
tightly: (adv) closely, steadily, tautly, strictly, securely, densely, stiffly, solidly, tipsily, stably, parsimoniously. ANTONYMS: (adv) loosely, insecurely, sparsely
timeless: (adj) eternal, everlasting, dateless, immortal, inopportune, interminable, undying, ageless, perpetual, endless, deathless. ANTONYMS: (adj) temporary, mortal, modern
timidly: (adv) fearfully, timorously, cautiously, shyly, diffidently, anxiously, nervously, shily, gingerly, modestly, apprehensively. ANTONYMS: (adv) confidently, bravely, daringly, brashly, fearlessly, decisively, brazenly
tinder: (n) spunk, punk, touchwood, ingle, nerve, ignitor, ignition, igniter, hoodlum, hood, goon
tingle: (v) prickle, itch, tickle, smart, sting, burn, creep; (n) tremble, tingling; (n, v) twitter, pain
tiniest: (adj) minimum, smallest possible, least possible, lowest, lowest possible, smallest. ANTONYM: (adj) maximum

tithe: (adj, n) tenth; (n) gavel, excise, custom, assessment, octroi, benevolence, tithing, disme; (n, v) tax; (adj) decimal
toads: (n) caecilians, class Amphibia, frogs, newts, salamanders
toast: (n, v) pledge, drink, plight; (v) roast, burn, bake, wassail, parch, crisp, inflame; (n) rusk
toddle: (v) paddle, stroll, saunter, walk, totter, coggle; (n, v) stride; (n) stalk, stump, strut, straddle
toil: (n, v) labor, work, drudge, sweat, drudgery, grind, labour, travail; (v) plod; (n) effort, exertion. ANTONYMS: (n) pastime, entertainment, fun, relaxation; (v) laze, neglect
toilette: (n) dress, costume, attire, raiment, drapery, guise, trim, John, lavatory, privy, bathroom
token: (n) memento, souvenir, note, keepsake, sign, relic, stamp, signal, indication; (adj) nominal; (n, v) trace. ANTONYM: (adj) great
tolerance: (n) leniency, patience, indulgence, allowance, lenience, margin, sufferance, permissiveness, leeway, kindness, consideration. ANTONYMS: (n) chauvinism, extremism, bigotry, impatience, prejudice, weakness, disapproval, severity, rejection, indifference, strictness
tolerant: (adj) liberal, patient, lenient, broad, kind, understanding, forbearing, permissive, forgiving, merciful; (adj, v) meek. ANTONYMS: (adj) strict, impatient, chauvinistic, bigoted, oppressive, prejudiced, unforgiving, harsh, severe, unsympathetic, biased
tongue: (n) lingua, speech, idiom, dialect, clapper, glossa, natural language, striker, talk; (v) lick; (adj) flowing
topic: (n) theme, question, matter, affair, issue, text, point, business, subject matter, substance, area
tops: (n) apex, pinnacle, pick; (adj) champion, elite, fabulous, leading, outstanding, uppermost, superb, superlative
tormenting: (v) bothering, teasing, pestering, harassing; (adj) harrowing, perturbing, plaguy, raging, upsetting, vexatious; (adj, v) worrying
torpid: (adj) inactive, sluggish, indolent, dull, slow, dormant, lazy, dead, lifeless, flat, supine. ANTONYMS: (adj) energetic, lively
torpor: (n) lethargy, lassitude, stupor, languor, indolence, sluggishness, listlessness, torpidity, torpidness; (adj, n) inactivity, inertia. ANTONYMS: (n) energy, vigor, activity
tortured: (adj) anguished, suffering, agonized, excruciate, excruciated, gnarled, hagridden, miserable, woeful, hurt
touching: (adj, v) affecting; (adj) poignant, pitiful, pathetic, adjacent, adjoining, emotional; (n) touch, contact; (prep) concerning, about. ANTONYMS: (adj) unaffecting, everyday, heartwarming, unmoving, heartbreaking, emotionless, unemotional, impassive
toward: (prep) to, towards, approaching, headed for, just before, of, in the direction of; (adv, prep) on; (adv) about, around, by. ANTONYMS: (prep) from, away
trace: (n, v) line, shadow, spot, hunt, trail; (n) dash, clue, indication, suggestion, sign; (v) pursue. ANTONYMS: (v) ignore; (n) lot, overtone
trackless: (adj) shoreless, roadless, unaccessible, inaccessible, lacking pathways, untracked, untrodden, untrod
traditions: (n) background, society, mores, conduct, behavior, civilization, customs
trailing: (n) tracking, drift, pursuit, streaminess, hunt, heeling; (adj) following, rambling, sprawling, prone, procumbent
trample: (v) oppress, stamp, squash, crush, tread, flatten, defeat, suppress, step, frustrate; (n) trampling
trance: (adj, n) ecstasy; (n, v) coma, charm; (n) fascination, daze, dream, captivation, spell, stupor, obstupefaction; (v) capture. ANTONYMS: (n) loyalist, reality, alertness
transaction: (n) dealing, business, dealings, proceeding, trade, concern, matter, bargain, negotiation, action, affair. ANTONYMS: (n) refusal, rejection, denial
transactions: (n) minutes, dealings, records, traffic, business, memoir, legal proceeding, judicial proceeding, intercourse, Hansard, proceeding
transfiguration: (n) metamorphosis, extreme unction, conversion, canonization, subpanation, impanation, invocation of saints, seven sacraments, mutation, auricular confession, viaticum
transformed: (adj) changed, malformed, rehabilitated, bewitched, misshapen, distorted, reformed
transient: (adj) fleeting, temporary, passing, transitory, fugacious, ephemeral, momentary, temporal, provisional; (adj, n) fugitive, vagabond. ANTONYMS: (adj) enduring, lasting, immanent, long; (n) resident
transition: (n) passage, transit, conversion, changeover, alteration, modulation, jump, transformation, modification, shift, leap
transported: (adj) ecstatic, rapt, elated, inspirited, spellbound, exultant, puffed up, proud, delighted, elate; (adv) on cloud nine. ANTONYM: (adj) dejected
trap: (n, v) net, catch, ambush, mesh, trick; (v) entrap, ensnare, entangle; (n) gin, noose, entanglement. ANTONYM: (v) release
travelled: (adj) cosmopolitan
traveller: (n) passenger, tourist, wanderer, voyager, wayfarer, mover, itinerant, courier, entrant, swimmer, outlander
travelling: (n) travel, peregrination, riding, commuting, aviation, driving, commutation, seafaring, junketing, circumnavigation, journey
treacherous: (adj) unfaithful, deceitful, false, perfidious, dangerous, disloyal, unreliable, unsafe, Punic, fraudulent, faithless. ANTONYMS: (adj) faithful, loyal, honest, safe, true, genuine, forthright, stable, harmless, dependable, open
treasure: (n) gem, fortune, riches, funds; (n, v) hoard, prize, store; (v) cherish, appreciate; (adj, n) jewel, precious stone. ANTONYMS: (v) dislike, disparage, scorn, neglect; (n) dud, poverty
treasured: (adj) precious, prized, dear, beloved, loved, valued, appreciated, favorite, etched in your mind, esteemed, invited. ANTONYM: (adj) unremarkable
treble: (adj) threefold, ternary, triplex, thribble, double, dual, high, voce di testa, shrill; (adj, v) triple; (v) sing
tremble: (adj, n, v) shiver; (n, v)

quiver, shudder, thrill, palpitate; (adj, v) totter, quake; (n) throb; (v) flutter, quail, falter. ANTONYMS: (v) steady, calm

trembling: (adj, n) shaking; (adj, n, v) tremor; (adj) shaky, quaking, shivering, flutter; (n) palpitation, quiver, vibration, shiver, quake. ANTONYMS: (adj) stable, steady

tremor: (n, v) shiver, quake, shudder, shake; (n) agitation, vibration, earthquake, convulsion; (adj, v) flutter; (adj, n) trepidation; (v) tremble

tremulous: (adj) shaky, trembling, shaking, fearful, apprehensive, quavering, fidgety, shivering; (n) nervous, diffident, coy. ANTONYMS: (adj) stable, confident, steady

tremulously: (adv) fearfully, shiveringly, tremblingly, shakingly, quiveringly, quaveringly, fidgetily, vibratingly

trespass: (adj, v) offend; (n, v) sin, breach; (n) offense, invasion, infringement, encroachment; (v) encroach, infringe, intrude, invade

trick: (n, v) deceive, cheat, fraud, deceit, joke, sham, con; (n) prank, deception, device; (v) mislead. ANTONYMS: (n) frankness, honesty, misunderstanding, seriousness, truthfulness; (adj) real, genuine, innocent

tricks: (n) actions, behavior, thing, clowning around, fooling, magic, plunder, possession, activities

trifle: (n, v) play; (adj, n, v) trinket; (v) dally, fiddle, flirt, fool, frivol; (n) nothing, triviality, detail; (adj, n) bagatelle

trimmings: (n) embellishments, trappings, finery, fixing, superfluities, plumage, edge, paraphernalia, gear, additions, fixings

triumph: (v) exult, prevail, crow, rejoice, succeed; (n, v) glory, win, joy; (n) victory, conquest, exultation. ANTONYMS: (n) failure, defeat, sorrow, unhappiness, dud, sadness, loss, flop; (v) fail, lose, forfeit

triumphant: (adj) victorious, successful, triumphal, exulting, winning, joyful, rejoicing, elated, conquering, prideful; (adj, v) exultant. ANTONYMS: (adj) disappointed, failing, losing, defeated, miserable, sorrowful

trivial: (adj) trifling, frivolous, little, small, commonplace, superficial, petty, paltry, inconsiderable, piddling, slight. ANTONYMS: (adj) important, vital, major, urgent, profound, crucial, consequential, considerable, enormous, mature, serious

trodden: (adj) trampled, damaged, beaten, compressed, packed down. ANTONYM: (adj) loose

trot: (n, v) run; (n) crib, canter, pony, gait, ride, lope; (v) gallop, general, frequent, household

troubled: (adj, v) concerned, solicitous; (adj) distressed, anxious, worried, uneasy, uncomfortable, disconcerted, upset, apprehensive, restless. ANTONYMS: (adj) unconcerned, composed, calm, easy, relaxed, tranquil, assured, carefree, brave, stable, unaffected

troublesome: (adj) difficult, hard, arduous, bothersome, inconvenient, onerous, awkward, annoying, laborious, tough, heavy. ANTONYMS: (adj) nice, helpful, useful, advantageous, convenient, uncomplicated, delightful

troubling: (adj) worrying, disquieting, distressing, distressful, disconcerting, alarming, perturbing, bad, annoying, sad, worrisome. ANTONYM: (adj) reassuring

trusted: (adj) intimate, confidential, sure, bosom, beloved, cherished, familiar, trustworthy, indisputable, trusty, reliable

trusting: (adj) credulous, unsuspecting, naive, confident, confiding, simple, innocent, gullible, reliant, give, easy to fool. ANTONYMS: (adj) distrustful, suspicious, doubtful, hesitant, protective, shrewd, disingenuous, smart, jaded

truthful: (adj) honest, genuine, frank, real, candid, sincere, guileless, realistic, reliable, faithful, honorable. ANTONYMS: (adj) dishonest, inaccurate, fictional, guarded, lying, improbable, deceptive, deceitful, false, wrong, evasive

tube: (n) conduit, subway, duct, electron tube, hose, channel, metro, cylinder, hosepipe, television, box

tucker: (v) weary, beat, tire, fatigue, frazzle, eat, ticktock, tick, thump, thrum; (n) bib

tufted: (adj) hairy, cespitose, caespitose, topknotted, plumed, hirsute, rough, decorated, filamentous, fimbriated, bushy

tune: (n) song, strain, air, harmony, note, concord; (v) adjust, regulate, string, tune up; (n, v) chant. ANTONYMS: (n) silence; (v) untune

turban: (n) peruke, pelt, periwig, pillbox, toque, front, caftan, chignon, turbant, headgear, millinery

turf: (n) sward, greensward, ground, grass, field, peat, lawn, green, divot, Corso, race course

turmoil: (n, v) commotion; (n) disturbance, agitation, disorder, hubbub, confusion, excitement, flurry, mess, hullabaloo, disruption. ANTONYMS: (n) order, calm, peace, accord

turnip: (n) rutabaga, Swede, root vegetable, cruciferous vegetable, white turnip, clock

turnpike: (n) superhighway, motorway, freeway, expressway, road, pike, highway, hayfork, pick, royal road, state highway

twelvemonth: (n) calendar year, civil year, financial year, common year, amount of time, time period, period of time, bissextile year, class, yr, period

twilight: (n) nightfall, night, sunset, gloaming, evening, sundown, eventide, fall, decline, evenfall; (adj) aurora. ANTONYMS: (n) daybreak, sunrise

twilled: (adj) corded, twill, unsmooth, rough

twine: (n, v) coil; (n) string, rope, cord; (v) lace, entwine, enlace, meander, weave, intertwine, twist. ANTONYMS: (v) untwine, straighten, unwind

twinge: (n, v) pinch, sting; (n) pang, pain, stab, hurt, throb, qualm; (v) nip, prick, prickle

twisted: (adj) perverted, deformed, bent, distorted, misshapen, coiled, twined, curved, wry, contorted; (adj, v) winding. ANTONYMS: (adj) tidy, normal, perfect, wholesome

twisting: (adj) tortuous, winding, sinuous, crooked, zigzag, meandering; (n) distortion, turn, spin, torsion, overrefinement

twopence: (n) tuppence, coin

ugly: (adj, adv) surly; (adj) nasty, repulsive, frightful, forbidding, disagreeable, hideous, gruesome, evil, offensive, shocking. ANTONYMS: (adj) attractive, flowing, ornamental, nice, lovely, pleasant, safe, kind, gentle, appealing, agreeable

unaccompanied: (adj) lone, solitary,

unescorted, unaided, unattended; (adj, adv) only, on your own, without help; (adv) solo, singly, by yourself. ANTONYM: (adj) together

unaccountable: (adj) incomprehensible, inexplicable, strange, unintelligible, unexplainable, mysterious, impenetrable, undiscoverable, undecipherable, unknowable, unnatural. ANTONYMS: (adj) accountable, explainable, responsible, explicable

unaccustomed: (adj) new, strange, unusual, inexperienced, unseasoned, unacquainted, uncustomary, rare, unfamiliar, unwonted; (adj, v) untrained. ANTONYMS: (adj) familiar, normal, ready, usual, prepared, knowledgeable, customary

unacquainted: (adj) unaware, unaccustomed, strange, oblivious, ignorant, unapprized, unapprised, unweeting, inexperienced, innocent, not learned. ANTONYMS: (adj) accustomed, knowledgeable, conscious, informed

unaffected: (adj) sincere, artless, natural, plain, real, genuine, unimpressed, ingenuous, naive, untouched, honest. ANTONYMS: (adj) unnatural, sophisticated, refined, pretentious, moved, hurt, disturbed, changed, vulnerable, dishonest, emotional

unalterable: (adj) constant, inalterable, immutable, permanent, invariable, firm, changeless, rigid, stable, irrevocable, unchangeable. ANTONYMS: (adj) alterable, impermanent, temporary, fluid, flexible

unapproachable: (adj) aloof, distant, remote, interminable, unreachable, immeasurable, incalculable, inexhaustible, illimitable, innumerable, out of reach. ANTONYMS: (adj) accessible, friendly, easy, affable

unasked: (adj) unwelcome, unwanted, unbidden, unsought, uncalled, wanton, voluntary, unrequested, willing, superfluous, spontaneous. ANTONYMS: (adj) invited, solicited

unaware: (adj) ignorant, incognizant, unwitting, unknowing, unconscious, oblivious, blind, unmindful, unweeting, unknowledgeable, uninformed. ANTONYMS: (adj) cognizant, conscious, informed, witting, knowledgeable, mindful, wary

unbecoming: (adj) indecorous, unseemly, inappropriate, indecent, indelicate, untoward, unworthy, unsuitable, shameful, unbefitting, incongruous. ANTONYMS: (adj) dignified, becoming, fitting, proper, seemly, correct, decent, suitable

unbelief: (n) atheism, incredulity, skepticism, distrust, scepticism, misbelief, agnosticism, doubt, heresy, suspicion, misgiving. ANTONYM: (n) faith

unbent: (adj) straight, upright, erect, neat, level, consecutive, good, just, accurately fitted; (v) virgate; (n) erecter

unborn: (adj) uncreated, unmade, unproduced, unconceived, unbred, not begotten, unbegotten; (n) posterity. ANTONYM: (adj) born

unbroken: (adj) continuous, entire, complete, continual, constant, intact, incessant, endless, whole, undivided, solid. ANTONYMS: (adj) intermittent, temporary, plowed, discontinuous, disturbed, sporadic, partial

uncertain: (adj) changeable, dubious, questionable, indistinct, equivocal, chancy, unsure, unsafe; (adj, v) indefinite, vague; (adj, n) doubtful. ANTONYMS: (adj) definite, clear, decisive, sure, decided, unquestionable, inevitable, safe, unreserved, sealed, determined

uncertainty: (n) doubtfulness, suspicion, distrust, indecision, suspense, irresolution, hesitation, incertitude, dubiety, question, dubiousness. ANTONYMS: (n) certainty, decisiveness, confidence, clarity, sureness, definiteness, resolution, predictability, security, certitude, understanding

unchanged: (adj) regular, undeviating, unalterable, unchanging, invariable, unvarying, unvaried, unmoved; (adj, v) identical, same; (v) like. ANTONYMS: (adj) reformed, distorted, affected, changed, altered, varied, fluid

uncivil: (adj) discourteous, disrespectful, impolite, coarse, brusque, curt, blunt, barbarous, short; (adj, n) rough, harsh. ANTONYMS: (adj) polite, courteous, gracious

uncomfortable: (adj) ill at ease, embarrassing, troubled, disagreeable, inconvenient, difficult, discomfited, anxious, uneasy, cheerless; (v) untoward. ANTONYMS: (adj) relaxed, comfy, happy, untroubled, painless, content, easy, straightforward

uncommon: (adj) extraordinary, peculiar, scarce, singular, strange, special, exceptional, infrequent, odd, unusual, unaccustomed. ANTONYMS: (adj) typical, usual, normal, familiar, poor, ordinary, bad, imperfect, customary, accustomed, frequent

unconcern: (n) apathy, nonchalance, insouciance, coldness, detachment, impassiveness, insensibility, disregard, phlegm, carelessness, lethargy. ANTONYMS: (n) responsiveness, worry, anxiety, interest

unconscious: (adj) involuntary, unaware, ignorant, unwitting, subconscious, oblivious, automatic, insensible, unintentional, instinctive, senseless. ANTONYMS: (adj) conscious, awake, deliberate, aware, voluntary, intentional, alive, wary

unconsciously: (adv) instinctively, unintentionally, unthinkingly, unwittingly, ignorantly, innocently, comatosely, automatically, obliviously, unsuspectingly, inadvertently. ANTONYMS: (adv) consciously, deliberately, knowingly, purposely

unconsciousness: (n) blackout, insensibility, grogginess, loss of consciousness, coma, trance, stupefaction, faint, unawareness, ignorance, torpor. ANTONYM: (n) awareness

uncovered: (adj) naked, open, bare, nude, unclothed, bald, unreserved, unprotected, evident, frank, manifest. ANTONYMS: (adj) indoor, concealed

unctuous: (adj) greasy, oleaginous, smooth, buttery, fulsome, fat, adipose, fatty; (adj, v) sanctimonious; (v) soapy, pietistical

uncut: (adj) complete, untrimmed, standing, intact, unbroken, unshorn, unsevered; (n) unabridged; (adj, n) boisterous, harsh, grating. ANTONYMS: (adj) mown, trimmed

undeceived: (adj) disillusioned, disenchanted

undefinable: (adj) undefined, inexpressible, indescribable, vague, inexplicable, ineffable, incommunicable

underneath: (adv, prep) below, under; (adj) down, inferior, supporting; (n) bottom, base, underside; (adv) under that, under it; (prep) unbecoming. ANTONYMS: (n) top; (adv) up, over, above, apparently

undersized: (adj) little, undersize, short, diminutive, stunted, tiny, puny, dwarf, underweight, weak, underdeveloped. ANTONYMS: (adj) big, robust

undertaking: (n) promise, attempt, project, venture, adventure, endeavor, job, effort; (n, v) task, labor, business

undertone: (n) undercurrent, murmur, tinge, nuance, whisper, suggestion, implication, connotation, overtone, association, hint

undeserved: (adj) unfair, unearned, unjust, inequitable, undue, excessive, iniquitous, wrong, unreasonable, unwarranted. ANTONYMS: (adj) rightful, fair, just

undimmed: (adj) sunshiny, promising, sunny, splendid, smart, shining, lustrous, fresh, brilliant, shiny, burnished

undivided: (adj) complete, whole, unbroken, total, single, integral, continuous, united, full, exclusive, solid. ANTONYMS: (adj) partial, separate, broken, imperfect, individual

undoing: (n) ruin, destruction, loss, curse, cancellation, reverse, bane, doom, collapse, annulment, disaster. ANTONYMS: (n) building, creation

undone: (adj) ruined, unfinished, sunk, done for, finished, behindhand, decayed; (adj, v) doomed; (v) accursed, to be pitied, devoted

undoubtedly: (adv) certainly, positively, definitely, indubitably, no doubt, clearly, unquestionably, unquestionedly, all right, beyond any doubt; (adj, adv) doubtless. ANTONYMS: (adv) doubtfully, indefinite, ambiguously, possibly

undue: (adj) excessive, immoderate, unreasonable, unwarranted, inordinate, extravagant, exorbitant, extreme, unfair, improper, unjustified. ANTONYMS: (adj) reasonable, due, appropriate, sensible, justified, just, fair

unduly: (adv) too, overly, illegally, inordinately, immoderately, unfairly, unreasonably, extremely, irrationally, over, unjustly. ANTONYMS: (adv) reasonably, sensibly, moderately, duly, justifiably, fairly

unearthly: (adj) weird, ghostly, uncanny, ethereal, unworldly, preternatural, spectral, eerie, spiritual, strange, heavenly. ANTONYMS: (adj) natural, physical, acceptable, normal, human

uneasily: (adv) apprehensively, restlessly, worriedly, nervously, solicitously, unquietly, constrainedly, awkwardly, fretfully, unsettledly, fearfully. ANTONYMS: (adv) calmly, confidently, unconcernedly, comfortably, fearlessly

uneasiness: (n) disquiet, discomfort, inquietude, anxiety, unease, malaise, disquietude, apprehension, unrest, impatience; (n, v) agitation. ANTONYMS: (n) peace, calm, confidence

uneasy: (adj) anxious, fidgety, restless, concerned, nervous, apprehensive, ill at ease, unquiet, awkward, fretful, restive. ANTONYMS: (adj) calm, untroubled, composed, relaxed, easy, unconcerned, still, comfortable, carefree, confident, serene

unemphatic: (adj) nonemphatical, unaccented

unendurable: (adj) intolerable, insufferable, insupportable, excruciating, impossible, unsupportable, uneasy, teasing, passionate, not patient, intolerant. ANTONYM: (adj) bearable

unequal: (adj) different, unlike, uneven, rough, lopsided, unfair, inadequate, disparate, disproportionate, unbalanced, unsymmetrical. ANTONYMS: (adj) equal, even, fair, identical, similar, same, level, constant, balanced, like, corresponding

unexampled: (adj) new, unique, unparalleled, rare, novel, undescribed, peerless, inimitable, singular, fantastic, fresh

unexpected: (adj) sudden, abrupt, casual, unforeseen, unanticipated, accidental, strange, unsuspected; (adj, v) unlooked for, unpredicted; (n) surprise. ANTONYMS: (adj) expected, gradual, normal, commonplace, protracted, ordinary, typical, customary

unexpectedly: (adv) by chance, suddenly, abruptly, casually, unforeseenly, unawares, surprisingly, unanticipatedly, hastily, strangely, circumstantially. ANTONYMS: (adv) intentionally, gradually, normally, predictably

unfair: (adj) unjust, dishonest, inequitable, foul, deceitful, wrongful, undeserved, dishonorable, fraudulent, underhand, unsporting. ANTONYMS: (adj) just, reasonable, balanced, rightful, honest, sporting, impartial, evenhanded, unbiased, innocent, justified

unfamiliar: (adj) strange, new, unaccustomed, unacquainted, uncommon, novel, mysterious, foreign, unidentified, inexperienced, unusual. ANTONYMS: (adj) familiar, recognizable, known, usual, experienced, versed, accustomed

unfastened: (adj) open, movable, loose, unbuttoned, overt, opened, opened out, slack, undecided, undetermined, assailable. ANTONYMS: (adj) buttoned, fixed, shut, tied

unfavourable: (adj) adverse, inauspicious, untoward, hostile, contrary, inappropriate, inimical, harmful, inconvenient, awkward, unsuitable. ANTONYM: (adj) favorable

unfeeling: (adj) harsh, impassive, cold, cruel, callous, merciless, pitiless, ruthless, numb, insensible, insensitive. ANTONYMS: (adj) caring, sympathetic, sensitive, kind, understanding, merciful, feeling, warm, tactful, concerned, compassionate

unfitting: (adj) improper, unsuitable, incorrect, unbecoming, incompatible, out or keeping, unseemly, incongruous, inadequate, unsuited; (v) unfit. ANTONYM: (adj) suitable

unflinching: (adj) resolute, steadfast, undaunted, firm, unfaltering, determined, dauntless, intrepid, undeviating, constant, unswerving

unfolded: (adj) extended, stretched, outspread, outstretched, widely spread, stretched out, explicate, evolved, displayed, expanded, detailed

unfolding: (n) development, growth, flowering, display, recitation, dawn, process, solution, disclosure; (adj) ongoing, duration

unforbidden: (v) unforbid; (adj) permissible
unforeseen: (adj, v) unexpected, unanticipated, unlooked for; (adj) sudden, accidental, contingent, casual, surprising, chance, incidental; (adj, adv) out of the blue. ANTONYMS: (adj) predicted, expected, direct
unfounded: (adj) groundless, unwarranted, false, idle, unsound, untrue, unsupported, erroneous, gratuitous, unsubstantiated, vain. ANTONYMS: (adj) valid, proven, justified, supported, substantiated, admiring, sound, rational, logical
unfriendliness: (n) disaffection, aggression, enmity, alienation, dislike, rancor, ill will, misanthropy, animosity, unkindness, bad constitution. ANTONYMS: (n) friendliness, closeness, warmth, welcome, harmony
unhappy: (adj) gloomy, dismal, depressed, melancholy, sad, miserable, sorrowful, distressed, disconsolate, infelicitous, low. ANTONYMS: (adj) happy, cheerful, satisfied, pleased, glad, euphoric, fortunate, contented, joyful, timely, lucky
unhinged: (adj) crazy, mad, demented, disturbed, sick, distracted, brainsick, all possessed, meshugge; (v) frustrated, crossed. ANTONYMS: (adj) sane, steady, stable
unhurt: (adj, v) uninjured, unbroken; (adj) safe, untouched, intact, unscathed, whole, safe and sound, sound; (v) unmarred, unsinged. ANTONYMS: (adj) hurt, injured
unkind: (adj) cruel, harsh, unfeeling, inconsiderate, pitiless, heartless, inhuman, hard, thoughtless, brutal, mean. ANTONYMS: (adj) kind, considerate, pleasant, friendly, thoughtful, tactful, mild, gentle, generous, flattering, compassionate
unkindness: (n) heartlessness, callousness, thoughtlessness, inconsideration, inconsiderateness, diskindness, insensitivity, unpleasantness, unfriendliness, unkindliness, insensitiveness. ANTONYMS: (n) goodwill, diplomacy, gentleness, humanity, thoughtfulness
unlocked: (adj) unbarred, unlatched, unbolted, not closed, loose, unsecured, ajar, wide open, unguaranteed
unloved: (v) unmourned; (adj) abhorrent, unpopular, unlamented, unbeloved, reviled, loathed, hated, disliked, detested, despicable. ANTONYM: (adj) loved
unlucky: (adj) luckless, hapless, unhappy, sinister, inauspicious, unsuccessful, ominous, adverse, disastrous, unfavorable; (adj, v) untoward. ANTONYMS: (adj) fortunate, happy, auspicious, successful
unmarketable: (adj) unvendible, unsalable
unmeaningly: (adv) senselessly, insignificantly
unmixed: (adj, v) simple, sheer, mere, downright; (adj) absolute, unmingled, undiluted, straight, uncompounded, single, plain. ANTONYM: (adj) impure
unmodified: (adj) untouched, complete, fixed, neat, pure, savage, straight, supreme, unconditional, unlimited, untainted. ANTONYMS: (adj) provisional, tainted
unmurmuring: (adj) unprotesting
unnatural: (adj) affected, artificial, grotesque, supernatural, forced, abnormal, eccentric, uncanny, stilted, mannered, anomalous. ANTONYMS: (adj) natural, normal, real, unaffected, commonplace, genuine, sincere
unnoticed: (v) unheeded, unthought of, unregarded; (adj) disregarded, unmarked, hidden, neglected, ignored, obscure; (adj, v) unremarked, unobserved. ANTONYMS: (adj) evident, seen, noticeable, noted, obvious
unnurtured: (adj) unfledged, untaught, uneducated, uncultivated, unlicked
unobserved: (adj, v) unseen; (v) unheeded, unregarded, unthought of, unperceived; (adj) ignored, not noticed, hidden, unmarked, unnoted; (adv) secretly. ANTONYM: (adj) evident
unobtrusive: (adj) unassuming, discreet, inconspicuous, restrained, unnoticeable, humble, unostentatious, diffident, reserved, unpretentious, subdued. ANTONYMS: (adj) obtrusive, conspicuous, elaborate, flaunting, noticeable, loud, brash, obvious
unowned: (adj) ownerless, unculled, unattended, abandoned, unappropriated. ANTONYM: (adj) owned
unpleasant: (adj, n) harsh; (adj) disagreeable, obnoxious, ugly, nasty, sour, awkward, repulsive, forbidding, bad, hard. ANTONYMS: (adj) delightful, agreeable, wonderful, nice, enjoyable, attractive, comfortable, charming, inoffensive, amicable, cordial
unpleasantly: (adv) distastefully, disagreeably, rudely, obnoxiously, bitterly, painfully, awfully, troublesomely, offensively, hardly, displeasingly. ANTONYMS: (adv) delightfully, agreeably, kindly, politely, graciously, attractively, sweetly, well, humbly
unpopularity: (n) disrepute, quality, disfavor. ANTONYMS: (n) popularity, approval
unprecedented: (adj) singular, unexampled, extraordinary, unique, new, undescribed, remarkable, exceptional, almost unheard of, uncommon, unheard-of. ANTONYMS: (adj) usual, unexceptional, unremarkable
unprepared: (adj) impromptu, extemporaneous, raw, unrehearsed, unready, extemporary, crude, improvised, unwary, surprised, weak. ANTONYMS: (adj) prepared, ready, attentive
unpropitious: (adj) inauspicious, adverse, unlucky, unfavorable, inopportune, evil, sinister, disastrous, infelicitous; (adj, v) cross, hostile
unqualified: (adj) incompetent, sheer, total, unconditional, absolute, incapable, complete, utter, unmitigated, unfit, perfect. ANTONYMS: (adj) qualified, trained, prepared, competent, fit, conditional, indefinite, tentative, capable, incomplete, partial
unquestionable: (adj) incontrovertible, indisputable, sure, incontestable, indubitable, certain, unequivocal, irrefutable, undoubted, definite; (v) unimpeachable. ANTONYMS: (adj) dubious, uncertain, doubtful, indefinite, tenuous, provisional, debatable, disputable
unquestioned: (adj) undisputed, unquestionable, unanimous, clear-cut, accepted, axiomatic, proverbial; (adj, v) unchallenged; (v) uncontested, uncontradicted
unquestioning: (adj) credulous, sure, strong, positive, questionless, safe, wholehearted, secure, tacitly

comprised, unfaltering, steady
unreasonable: (adj) immoderate, undue, absurd, extravagant, excessive, preposterous, exorbitant, illogical, inordinate, irrational, ridiculous. ANTONYMS: (adj) logical, practical, sensible, affordable, economical, justified, realistic, fair, obliging, just, rational
unrelentingly: (adv) unremittingly, persistently, adamantly, harshly, incessantly, continuously, constantly, inexorably, endlessly, insistently, severely
unremittingly: (adv) constantly, incessantly, unendingly, continuously, ceaselessly, unceasingly, endlessly, unfailingly, unrelentingly, insistently, persistently. ANTONYMS: (adv) inconsistently, sporadically
unresistingly: (adv) inertly, submissively, inactively, meekly, clearly, evidently, fruitfully, openly, pregnantly, significantly
unrest: (n) agitation, disquiet, fermentation, disorder, tumult, revolution, ferment, turbulence, commotion, excitement, chaos. ANTONYMS: (n) calm, rest, peace, harmony, calmness, order, accord, stability
unrobe: (v) disrobe, disattire, disarray
unseen: (adj, v) unknown; (adj) invisible, concealed, hidden, unobserved, secret, veiled, latent; (v) unheeded, unperceived; (n) spiritual world. ANTONYMS: (adj) seen, visible, open, famous, noticeable
unselfish: (adj) selfless, altruistic, disinterested, liberal, magnanimous, philanthropic, considerate, beneficent, charitable, kind, helpful. ANTONYMS: (adj) greedy, uncharitable, thoughtless
unsensible: (adj) inadvisable, unreasonable
unshaken: (adj) steady, firm, constant, undismayed, undaunted, unallayed, unworn, unwavering, unmoved, steadfast, calm
unsound: (adj) false, shaky, fallacious, faulty, rotten, unreliable, invalid, unsafe, imperfect, unreasonable, weak. ANTONYMS: (adj) valid, sound, well, safe, steady, strong, logical, watertight, stable, good, perfect
unstring: (v) take, take away, shake, enervate, emasculate, remove
unsuspecting: (adj) gullible, naive, innocent, unsuspicious, credulous, unaware, trustful, unconscious, unwary, not suspicious, unwitting. ANTONYMS: (adj) suspicious, shrewd, prepared, expecting, conscious, realizing
unsuspectingly: (adv) innocently, trustingly, naively, unconsciously, credulously, unwittingly, confidingly, unwarily, without knowing, accidentally, unintentionally. ANTONYM: (adv) deliberately
unsustained: (v) weak, spiritless, soft, frail, foolish, pliant, not stiff, not sonorous, not potent, debilitated; (adj) short
untaught: (adj) illiterate, ignorant, unschooled, uninformed, untutored, uninstructed, uncultivated, unlicked, unnurtured, unhatched, unfledged. ANTONYMS: (adj) trained, educated, literate, economical
untouched: (adj) intact, unharmed, unmoved, unscathed, virgin, whole, unhurt, new, impervious, imperturbable, impassive. ANTONYMS: (adj) affected, touched, refined, vulnerable, used, spoiled, partial, injured, marred, tainted, impure
untried: (adj) raw, new, untested, unseasoned, fresh, untrodden, unsalted, young, unverified, untouched; (v) undetermined. ANTONYMS: (adj) proven, seasoned, familiar, experienced
untroubled: (adj) calm, quiet, peaceful, composed, carefree, serene, unworried, clear, still, undisturbed; (adj, v) smooth. ANTONYMS: (adj) anxious, turbulent, uneasy, worried, insecure, disturbed, unnerved, strict, heavy, bothered, perturbed
unturned: (v) undeviating; (adj) not turned, unswerving, undistorted
unusually: (adj, adv) uncommonly, particularly, outstandingly, remarkably, singularly, curiously; (adv) rarely, peculiarly, extraordinarily, signally, abnormally. ANTONYMS: (adv) usually, regularly, typically, frequently, slightly, commonly, ordinarily
unvarying: (adj) unchanging, invariable, constant, steady, uniform, invariant, changeless, consistent, unvaried, unchanged, equal. ANTONYMS: (adj) irregular, multiform, varied, dynamic, erratic, unequal
unvaryingly: (adv) consistently, unchangingly, steadily, changelessly, evenly, homogeneously, regularly, unfailingly, equally, unchangedly, invariantly
unwaveringly: (adv) firmly, unfalteringly, loyally, fixedly, resolutely, faithfully, solidly, unswervingly, consistently, steadily, firm. ANTONYMS: (adv) unreliably, halfheartedly
unwilling: (adj) involuntary, loath, disinclined, averse, recalcitrant, backward, indisposed, grudging, loth, adverse, forced. ANTONYMS: (adj) inclined, amenable, keen, prepared, ready, eager, disposed, agreeable, accepting, happy
unwonted: (adj) unaccustomed, rare, unusual, unused, infrequent, uncustomary, singular, extraordinary, scarce, unaccountable, remarkable
unworn: (adj) unallayed, unwithered, unshaken, not habituated, not familiar, lately manifested, fresh, modern, new, new scenes, recent. ANTONYM: (adj) worn
upland: (n) plateau, elevation, moorland, table, eminence, rise, Highlands, ridge, hill, flat terrain; (adj) mountainous
uppermost: (adj) top, upmost, upper, highest, chief, maximum, supreme, greatest, major, outermost; (n) main. ANTONYMS: (adj) bottom, lowest, trivial, lower
upset: (n, v) overturn, trouble, disquiet, overthrow; (v) agitate, subvert, perturb, confuse, reverse; (adj) unsettled; (n) disturbance. ANTONYMS: (v) please, soothe, encourage, delight, fail; (adj) pleased, confident, happy, content; (n) peace, happiness
upward: (adv) upwards, upwardly, aloft; (adj) overhead, rising, upper, increasing, open, vertical, mounting, upright. ANTONYMS: (adj) descending, downward; (adv) down
urge: (v) push, press, advocate, persuade, impel, induce; (n, v) spur, drive, force; (n) impulse; (adj, v) incite. ANTONYMS: (n) dislike, hate, aversion, disinclination; (v) dissuade, oppose, demand, prevent, restrain
urgency: (n) pressure, haste, necessity, hurry, press, stress,

insistence, exigency, instancy, importance, speed. ANTONYMS: (n) unimportance, tardiness

urgent: (adj, v) importunate, important, clamorous; (adj) imperative, instant, immediate, quick, earnest, critical, serious, vital. ANTONYMS: (adj) unimportant, moderate, unnecessary, halfhearted, gentle, routine

urging: (n) spur, encouragement, prod, prodding, goad, advocacy, spurring, goading, influence, exhortation; (adj) driving

usefulness: (n) utility, service, benefit, convenience, practicality, avail, helpfulness, effectiveness, efficacy, value; (adj, n) worth. ANTONYMS: (n) inefficiency, inutility, clumsiness, insignificance

useless: (adj) pointless, unnecessary, needless, worthless, fruitless, hopeless, abortive, idle, barren, superfluous, unavailing. ANTONYMS: (adj) helpful, effective, competent, convenient, valuable, necessary, brilliant, great, meaningful, usable, worthwhile

utensil: (n) implement, tool, instrument, device, gadget, apparatus, organ, engine, contrivance, appliance, funnel

utility: (n, v) usefulness; (n) service, value, avail, purpose, practicality, advantage, help, helpfulness, effectiveness; (adj) functional. ANTONYM: (n) inutility

utmost: (adj, n) maximum, extreme, uttermost, furthermost, best, highest; (adj, adv) farthest; (adj, v) supreme; (adj) last, furthest; (adj, n, v) greatest. ANTONYMS: (adj) moderate, worst

utter: (v) say, state, speak, breathe, articulate, deliver, voice, pronounce; (adj, n, v) express, declare; (adj, v) tell. ANTONYMS: (adj) qualified, incomplete, uncertain, rather, slight; (v) conceal, hide, block

utterance: (n) pronunciation, expression, speech, exclamation, statement, remark, articulation, observation, language, phrase, speaking

uttered: (adj) expressed, express, verbalised, verbalized, vocal, explicit, oral; (v) spoke, quoth, said

utterly: (adv) completely, absolutely, totally, entirely, extremely, altogether, expressly, purely, dead, fully, wholly. ANTONYMS: (adv) partly, uncertain, slightly, incompletely, hardly, somewhat

vacancy: (n) emptiness, blank, opening, void, incogitancy, post, blankness, inanity, absence; (adj, n) vacuity; (adj) depletion. ANTONYMS: (n) fill, tenancy, overflow

vacant: (adj) blank, hollow, unfilled, void, free, unoccupied, bare, idle, expressionless, open; (adj, v) devoid. ANTONYMS: (adj) full, cognizant, overflowing, inhabited, aware, comprehending, animated, solid, expressive, knowing

vacillation: (n) indecision, irresolution, hesitancy, fluctuation, doubt, indecisiveness, instability, indetermination, oscillation, uncertainty, vibration. ANTONYMS: (n) decisiveness, insistence, resolution, determination

vague: (adj) obscure, indistinct, indeterminate, undefined, undetermined, indefinite, uncertain, faint, ambiguous; (adj, v) loose, equivocal. ANTONYMS: (adj) clear, distinct, exact, particular, precise, specific, sure, certain, defined, alert, detailed

vaguely: (adv) hazily, faintly, indistinctly, ambiguously, dimly, mistily, unclearly, loosely, shadowily, indeterminately, obscurely. ANTONYMS: (adv) clearly, definitely, unmistakably, exactly, closely, distinctly, alertly, calmly, considerably, intelligibly

vagueness: (n) ambiguity, indistinctness, haziness, indefiniteness, obscurity, dimness, ambiguousness, murkiness, unclearness, indirectness; (adj) inconceivableness. ANTONYMS: (n) clarity, accuracy, exactness, directness, concentration, certainty, reliability, confidence, clearness, attentiveness

vain: (adj) proud, arrogant, conceited, fruitless, idle, empty, abortive, ineffectual, unproductive, narcissistic; (adj, v) useless. ANTONYMS: (adj) shy, successful, possible, persuasive, selfless, fruitful, humble, useful, responsible, worthwhile, effective

vainly: (adv) uselessly, futilely, fruitlessly, conceitedly, in vain, worthlessly, abortively, bootlessly, arrogantly, unproductively; (adj, adv) foolishly. ANTONYMS: (adv) fruitfully, successfully, effectively

validity: (n) truth, authority, soundness, legitimacy, certainty, effect, power, cogency, effectiveness, reality, legality. ANTONYMS: (n) speciousness, invalidity, feebleness

vanished: (adj, v) extinct, lost; (adj) disappeared, departed, missing, died out, absent, dead, wiped out, bygone; (v) exhausted. ANTONYMS: (adj) found, living

vanity: (n) egotism, pride, emptiness, arrogance, futility, inanity, vainglory, conceitedness, pretension, pomposity; (adj, n) amour propre. ANTONYMS: (n) selflessness, humility, importance, value, effectiveness

varied: (adj) mixed, various, diverse, assorted, different, sundry, diversified, heterogeneous, manifold, motley, many. ANTONYMS: (adj) dull, homogeneous, uniform, same, unvaried, similar, like, conservative, unchanged, limited

variegated: (adj) mottled, dappled, varicolored, varicoloured, various, piebald, speckled, assorted, different, multicolored, pied. ANTONYM: (adj) uniform

variously: (adv) differently, multifariously, sundrily, variedly, severally, assortedly, dissimilarly, numerously, versatilely, diversly, variegatedly

veiled: (adj) hidden, unseen, covert, secret, masked, disguised, obscure, cryptic, covered, indistinct, oblique. ANTONYMS: (adj) overt, open, unveiled, blatant

venerable: (adj) ancient, reverend, estimable, August, respectable, aged, distinguished, sacred, worthy, of long standing, revered. ANTONYMS: (adj) unworthy, unimpressive, undignified, disreputable

vengeance: (n) retribution, reprisal, retaliation, requital, avengement, wrath, vendetta, spite, revengeance; (n, v) avenge, resentment. ANTONYMS: (n) forgiveness, acceptance

venture: (n, v) hazard, chance, stake, peril, attempt, gamble, adventure; (adj, n, v) dare; (n) speculation, danger; (v) endanger

veracious: (adj) truthful, true, reliable, accurate, trustworthy, faithful, veridical, frank, right, just, exact. ANTONYM: (adj) untrue

veracity: (n) truth, accuracy, exactness, truthfulness, fact, reality,

precision; (adj) probity; (adj, n) faithfulness, sincerity, candor. ANTONYMS: (n) mendacity, falsehood, falsity, dishonesty

verbal: (adj) oral, literal, unwritten, vocal, wordy, talkative, lexical, nominal, oral law, oral testimony, prolix. ANTONYMS: (adj) numerical, silent

vestry: (n) nave, quire, convocation, consistory, synod, choir, chapter, chancel, transept, aisle, conclave

vexation: (adj, n) annoyance, nuisance; (n) irritation, worry, aggravation, displeasure, chagrin, chafe, anger, frustration, botheration

vexed: (adj) troubled, irritated, angry, pestered, peeved, harassed, sore, harried, uneasy, cross, offended. ANTONYMS: (adj) calm, uncomplicated

vibrate: (v) shake, shiver, oscillate, tremble, quiver, shudder, swing, wobble, palpitate, thrill, throb

vibrations: (n) vibes, atmosphere, ambiance, premonition, undercurrent, feelings, vibraharp, vibraphone, ambience

vicariously: (adv) representatively

vice: (adj, n) imperfection, defect, blemish, failing, frailty; (n) corruption, sin, evil, immorality, iniquity, depravity. ANTONYMS: (n) asset, strength, propriety, virtue, righteousness, goodness, good, honesty; (adj) chief

vicinage: (adj, n) vicinity; (n) environs, confines, district, borderland, banlieue; (adj) purlieus

vicinity: (n) region, district, proximity, place, neighbourhood, locality, environs, vicinage, area, propinquity, nearness

vicious: (adj) malicious, bad, depraved, wicked, brutal, malevolent, cruel, venomous, immoral, nasty, corrupt. ANTONYMS: (adj) kind, gentle, friendly, good, right, pleasant, kindhearted, nice, cordial, constructive

victual: (v) provision, feed, supply, cater, furnish, purvey; (n) pabulum, edible, sustenance, victuals, eatable

victuals: (n) food, fare, viands, victual, edible, provender, grub, sustenance, support, diet, nutriment

viewing: (n) showing, contemplation, preview, exhibit, display, view, sight, look, show, performance, covering

vigorously: (adv) smartly, strongly, energetically, mightily, forcefully, heartily, actively, robustly, freshly, vehemently, ardently. ANTONYMS: (adv) lifelessly, wearily, passively, languorously, slowly, submissively, weakly, impassively, gently, lethargically

viii: (n) eighter from Decatur, octad, ogdoad, octonary, eighter, octet, octette, eightsome, digit

vindication: (n) defense, apology, excuse, defence, plea, alibi, acquittal, assertion, reason, exoneration, protection. ANTONYM: (n) accusation

vindictive: (adj) vengeful, malicious, revengeful, unforgiving, punitive, malevolent, remorseless, implacable, despiteful, vindicative, virulent. ANTONYMS: (adj) nice, charitable, forgiving, helpful, merciful, tolerant

vindictiveness: (n) rancor, revenge, malice, spite, unkindness, nastiness, spitefulness, meanness, malignity, malevolence, implacability

violently: (adj, adv) vehemently, hotly, madly, ardently; (adv) wildly, passionately, strongly, hard, furiously, turbulently; (adv, n) vigorously. ANTONYMS: (adv) gently, nonviolently, feebly, impassively, peacefully, tamely

virgin: (adj) pure, new, chaste, innocent, fresh, untouched, intact, virginal; (adj, n) vestal; (n) maid, girl. ANTONYMS: (adj) defiled, sullied

virtue: (adj, n) merit, excellence, quality, attribute; (n) honor, goodness, honesty, morality, decency, probity, efficacy. ANTONYMS: (n) wickedness, guilt, vice, peccadillo, sin, dishonor, immorality, evil, demerit, inadequacy, disadvantage

virtuous: (adj) upright, pure, righteous, good, moral, just, honorable, honest, respectable, decent, pious. ANTONYMS: (adj) bad, sinful, corrupt, impure, unethical, decadent, degenerate, irreverent

visitation: (v) visit, examination; (n) tribulation, calamity, annoyance, misfortune, irritation, infliction, inspection, test, ordeal

visiting: (adj) guest, impermanent, temporary, visitant

visitor: (n) visitant, tourist, company, traveler, caller, inspector, stranger, foreigner, alien, sightseer, surveyor

vista: (n) outlook, panorama, horizon, aspect, scene, landscape, scenery, picture, alley; (adj, n) view, perspective

vivacious: (adj) lively, animated, sprightly, vibrant, spry, effervescent, gay; (adj, v) cheerful, active, buoyant, brisk. ANTONYMS: (adj) dull, lethargic, listless, compliment, inactive, praise, languid, lifeless, serious, sluggish

vivid: (adj) intense, graphic, lifelike, brilliant, rich, live, strong, acute, animated, glowing, colorful. ANTONYMS: (adj) weak, bland, light, vague, straightforward, dark, modest, secretive

vividness: (n) strength, colour, color, chroma, saturation, brightness, vividity, vivacity, brilliance, clarity, vibrancy. ANTONYMS: (n) vagueness, weakness

vixenish: (adj) malicious, vixenly

vocal: (adj) oral, unwritten, outspoken, noisy, phonetic, sonant, sonorous, voiced, vowel, sung, eloquent. ANTONYMS: (adj) written, instrumental, shy, introverted, modest, silent

vocation: (n, v) calling, profession, employment; (n) occupation, job, trade, business, career, line, mission, line of work

voices: (n) chorus

void: (adj, n) hollow, null, blank; (n) emptiness, vacancy; (adj, v) vacant; (v) nullify, quash, rescind; (adj) invalid, vacuous. ANTONYMS: (v) validate, sanction, permit, keep, allow; (adj) full, occupied, filled, meaningful, solid; (n) fullness

volatile: (adj) erratic, unstable, mercurial, capricious, variable, flighty, inconstant, unsteady; (adj, v) fickle; (adj, n) frivolous, giddy. ANTONYMS: (adj) calm, steadfast, placid, nonvolatile, unflappable, reliable, serious, predictable

volcanic: (adj) igneous, plutonic, Vulcanian, unstable, extrusive; (v) simmering, stanchless, ungovernable, inextinguishable, burning, irrepressible

voter: (n) constituent, citizen, floater, inhabitant, national, resident, suffragist

vulgarity: (n) indecency, vulgarism, grossness, inelegance, crudeness, commonness, obscenity, rudeness, crudity, boorishness, indelicacy. ANTONYMS: (n) politeness, purity, classiness, civility, taste, decency

wager: (n, v) stake, hazard, risk,

venture, gamble, chance; (v) lay, pledge, pawn, play; (n) stakes
wainscot: (n) wainscoting, panel, plinth, wall, panelling, parietes, skirting board, wainscotting, lining, paneling
wainscoted: (adj) decorated
waist: (n) waistline, shank, middle, belly, isthmus, hourglass, undersurface; (adj) stricture, middle constriction, neck, wasp
waistcoat: (n) CHUDDER, barbe, garment, jerkin, jubbah, oilskins, pilot jacket, pajamas, cardigan, singlet, talma jacket
wake: (v) awaken, awake, rouse, stir, vigil, provoke, arouse, waken, excite; (n) train, trail. ANTONYMS: (v) nap, dissuade, discourage, snooze, stifle
waking: (adj) wakeful; (n) awakening, wakefulness, consciousness
wand: (n, v) stick, rod; (n) scepter, verge, mace, pole, baton, sceptre, fasces, rod of empire; (v) staff
wander: (n, v) stroll, saunter, tramp, drift; (v) stray, digress, err, travel, roam, deviate; (adj, v) rave. ANTONYMS: (v) settle, stay, think, converge
wandering: (adj) itinerant, nomadic, erratic, rambling, errant, migratory; (adj, v) stray, vagrant, vagabond, unsettled; (n) peregrination. ANTONYM: (adj) resident
wanting: (adj, v) missing; (adj) deficient, lacking, absent, defective, short, failing, insufficient, devoid, poor, incomplete. ANTONYMS: (adj) sufficient, satisfactory, adequate, full, present
warmed: (adj) warmer, warm, baked
warming: (n) thaw, melt, melting, warm, thawing, warmer, heat, heating system, temperature change, radiant heating; (adj) calefacient
warmly: (adv) cordially, ardently, hotly, genially, affectionately, vigorously, fervently, zealously, eagerly, strongly, pleasantly. ANTONYMS: (adv) coolly, inhospitably, sourly, disagreeably, indifferently, frostily, roughly, rudely, apathetically
warmth: (adj, n) glow, fire; (n) temperature, warmness, passion, fervor, geniality, affection, tenderness, fondness, sympathy. ANTONYMS: (n) aloofness, chill, chilliness, coldness, coolness, unfriendliness, hostility, sourness, abruptness, plainness, frostiness
warrant: (n, v) permit, vouch, license, assure, sanction, empower; (n) authority, authorization, security; (v) justify, ensure. ANTONYMS: (n) break; (v) debar
warranted: (adj) legitimate, secured, bonded, legal, locked, mistaken, necessary; (v) privileged, sanctioned, allowed; (n) securer
warren: (adj) milch cow, hydra, rabbit; (n) burrow, Robert Penn warren, channel, community, den, earl warren, earth, hole
washed: (adj) wash, cleaner, colored, refined, wet, watery
washing: (n) laundry, laundering, ablution, lavation, bathing, cleaning, purification, elutriation, dishwashing, backwash; (adj) cleansing
wasted: (adj, v) squandered, rotten, decayed, effete; (adj) thin, cadaverous, emaciated, gaunt, devastated, pointless, haggard. ANTONYMS: (adj) bloated, hypertrophied, strong, plump, obese, fruitful, useful
watchfulness: (n) care, caution, alertness, heed, wariness, jealousy, attentiveness, attention, solicitude, concern, anxiety. ANTONYMS: (n) recklessness, inattentiveness
waters: (n) Clara Erskine Clement, amnionic fluid, amniotic fluid, body fluid, liquid body substance, Ethel waters, body of water, bodily fluid, boot
watery: (adj) moist, diluted, wet, dilute, washy, thin, damp, fluid, aqueous, weak, insipid. ANTONYMS: (adj) strong, solid, dry, soft, dehydrated, lively, dark, clear, thick, hard
waved: (adj) undulating, wavy, curly, not dated, undated
waver: (v) vacillate, fluctuate, hesitate, totter, hover, wave; (n, v) quiver, flicker, shake, flutter, tremble. ANTONYMS: (v) resolve, continue
wavering: (adj, v) vacillating; (n) fluctuation, hesitation, vacillation; (adj) irresolute, indecisive, undecided, hesitant, uncertain, variable, changeable. ANTONYMS: (adj) decided, constant, resolute, stable, decisive; (n) resolution, stability
waving: (adj) flying, aflare, fluttering, flaring, flared, curly, burning, blazing, billowy, palpitating; (n) wafture
weakness: (adj, n) failing, fault, debility, defect, infirmity, fragility, feebleness, deficiency, imperfection, foible; (n) flaw. ANTONYMS: (n) power, dislike, intensity, supremacy, determination, advantage, brightness, superiority, resistance, robustness, energy
weapon: (n) arm, missile, arms, knuckles, spear, steel, tomahawk, firearm, flamethrower, projectile, hatchet
weariness: (n) exhaustion, tiredness, lassitude, languor, asthenopia, defatigation, grogginess, listlessness, boredom, ennui, prostration
weary: (adj, n, v) fatigue; (v) exhaust, tire out; (adj) tired, exhausted, fatigued, aweary, beat, languid; (n, v) jade, bore. ANTONYMS: (adj) energetic, fresh, lively, untiring, hopeful, refreshed; (v) refresh, enliven, energize, activate, rally
weave: (v) twine, braid, knit, entwine, interweave, wind, waver, plait, fabricate, inweave; (n) texture. ANTONYMS: (v) separate, unweave, unpick
weaver: (n) avadavat, Baya, ricebird, amadavat, oscine, weaver finch, tissue, texture, textile fabric, weaverbird, oscine bird
weaving: (adj) lurching, staggering, walking unsteadily, unstable, stupefying, irregular, astounding, unsteady; (n) braiding, creating from raw materials, aspect weaving
wedded: (adj, v) marital, connubial, matrimonial, conjugal, wed; (adj) nuptial, bridal. ANTONYMS: (adj) unmarried, unattached
wedged: (adj) impacted, cuneiform, jammed, fast, compacter, stuck, compact. ANTONYM: (adj) free
weekday: (n) working day, Tuesday, sat, Saturday, day of the week, feria, Th, Friday, Thursday, Monday; (adj) ferial
weekly: (n) magazine, journal, newspaper, periodical, academic journal, publication; (adv) hebdomadally, each week; (v) tertian, quotidian; (adj) hebdomadal
well-intentioned: (adj) innocent, sympathetic
well-off: (adj) rich, affluent, prosperous, opulent, substantial, moneyed, flush, snug, comfortable, fortunate
well-to-do: (adj) rich, well-off, affluent, opulent, prosperous,

moneyed, substantial, comfortable, easy, fortunate
wheeled: (adj) on wheels. ANTONYM: (adj) wheelless
wheels: (n) vehicle, truck, car, brush, force
wheelwright: (n) blacksmith, locksmith, sailmaker, Wright, bicycler, bicyclist, cyclist, sir Mortimer wheeler, wheel horse, sir Robert Eric Mortimer wheeler
whereupon: (adv) thereupon, hereupon, upon which, at what, at which
whimpering: (adj) whining, puling, childish, querulous; (n) sniveling, cry, tear
whip: (n, v) lash, strap, goad; (v) flog, flagellate, beat, punish, thrash, trounce, stir, wallop. ANTONYMS: (v) lose, return
whipping: (n) flagellation, beating, thrashing, licking, lashing, flogging, overcasting, debacle, slaughter, overlocking; (adj) snappy
whisper: (n, v) murmur, hum, mumble, suggestion, hint, inkling; (v) breathe, hiss; (n) rustle, trace, breath. ANTONYM: (n) information
whistle: (v) sing, twitter, hiss, warble, tweet, cheep, chirp, wheeze; (n, v) cry; (n) whistling, tin whistle
whit: (n) iota, atom, shred, scintilla, smidgen, tittle, jot, bit, particle, smidgin; (adj) dab
whiteness: (n) paleness, ivory, chalk, pearl, bone, bleach, alabaster, frostiness, hoariness, pallor, innocence. ANTONYM: (n) black
whitewashed: (adj) overpowered, overcome, crushed, conquered, beaten, routed, painted
whither: (adv) hither, thither, whereunto, whereto, for
whitsun: (n) Pentecost, Whitsuntide, Christian holiday, Whitweek; (adj) Whitson
whitsuntide: (n) Whitsun, Pinkster, Easter sunday, Christian holiday, Whitweek
wholesale: (adj) indiscriminate, extensive, broad, comprehensive; (adv) entirely, all in all, in large quantities, all; (v) sell; (n) retail, selling. ANTONYMS: (adj, adv, n, v) retail; (adj) partial, part, minor; (v) sell, buy
wholesome: (adj) healthy, beneficial, salubrious, healthful, salutary, sound, good, nutritious, nourishing, pure, hale. ANTONYMS: (adj) unwholesome, unhealthy, impure, indecent, sordid, warped, tainted, decadent, deadly, unsavory
wholly: (adj, adv) totally, entirely, altogether, quite, exclusively, perfectly, solely; (adv, pref) all; (adv) fully, utterly, absolutely. ANTONYMS: (adv) partially, inclusively, hardly, incompletely, slightly
wicked: (adj) bad, sinful, atrocious, evil, vile, depraved, mischievous, immoral, unholy, nasty, naughty. ANTONYMS: (adj) innocent, pure, pious, moral, kind, admirable, kindhearted, helpful, decent, assisting, aiding
wickedness: (n) depravity, sin, sinfulness, iniquity, harm, ill, vice, evilness, corruption, immorality, crime. ANTONYMS: (n) goodness, kindness, piety, righteousness, benevolence, religiousness, obedience, good
widower: (n) adult male, widowman, man
width: (n) extent, wideness, size, latitude, length, broadness, distance, dimension, thickness, amplitude, measurement. ANTONYMS: (n) thinness, height, tallness, narrowness
wifeless: (adj) unmarried, spouseless
wildfire: (n) conflagration, bush fire, blaze, forest fire, inferno, flame
wile: (n) trick, ruse, guile, deception, artifice, deceit, cheat, fraud, juggle; (n, v) dodge, stratagem. ANTONYM: (n) stupidity
wilful: (adj) headstrong, deliberate, intentional, knowing, designed, wayward, obstinate, willful, stubborn, studied, persistent
wilfully: (adv) willfully, designedly, deliberately, knowingly, frowardly, headstrongly, consciously, stubbornly, purposefully, persistently, on purpose
willingly: (adv) readily, voluntarily, cheerfully, spontaneously, helpfully, disposedly, actively, openly, obligingly, eagerly; (adj, adv) freely. ANTONYMS: (adv) grudgingly, reluctantly, uncooperatively, unenthusiastically
wilt: (v) flag, shrivel, sag, weaken, fade, languish, dry, wither, collapse, tire; (n) wilting. ANTONYMS: (v) flourish, rise, rally
wince: (v) shrink, cringe, quail, cower, jump, contract; (n, v) flinch, start, winch; (adj) bear ill; (n) sit on thorns
winged: (adj) swift, rapid, speedy, quick, flying, alate, sublime, lofty, alated, aligerous, composed
wings: (n) insignia, agency
wink: (n, v) twinkle, blink, flash; (n) instant, twinkling, trice; (v) sparkle, nictitate, flicker, nictate, leer
winking: (n) twinkling, wink, blink, New York minute, jiffy, instant, nictation, nictitation, trice, blink of an eye; (adj) pink ribbons
wisdom: (n) judiciousness, knowledge, sapience, sagacity, sense, prudence, discernment, insight, learning, depth, reasonableness. ANTONYMS: (n) stupidity, folly, inexperience, ignorance, flippancy, banality
wise: (adj) reasonable, sensible, sound, rational, sagacious, intelligent, prudent, shrewd, discreet; (adj, n) knowing; (n) method. ANTONYMS: (adj) unwise, stupid, ignorant, mistaken, illogical, reckless, naive, irrational, dense
wisely: (adv) judiciously, prudently, sagaciously, cleverly, discreetly, shrewdly, smartly, learnedly, astutely, sharply, perspicaciously. ANTONYMS: (adv) stupidly, recklessly, imprudently, immaturely, illogically
wishing: (n) wish, want, velleity, option, need, privation, lack, deprivation, deficiency, choice; (adj) desirous
withered: (adj) wizened, sear, shriveled, thin, shrunken, dry, dried up, wilted, faded, wizen; (v) lame. ANTONYM: (adj) plump
withering: (adj) devastating, extortionate, grinding; (v) dry, sarcastic, sharp, severe, satirical, sardonic, cutting; (n) shrinkage. ANTONYM: (adj) hopeful
withheld: (adj) hidden, uncommitted. ANTONYM: (adj) ongoing
witness: (n, v) testimony, attest, evidence; (n) bystander, eyewitness, onlooker, observer; (v) observe, notice, see, view. ANTONYMS: (v) deny, participate, refute
witnesses: (n) audience
wives: (n) woman
wondering: (adj) inquisitive, speculative, suspicious
wonderment: (n) wonder, admiration, amazement, astonishment, surprise, awe, bewilderment, marvel, curiosity, annus Mirabilis, esteem

wooded: (adj) arboreous, sylvan, woody, timbered, densely forested, leafy
workhouse: (n) workshop, almshouse, shop, jail, gaol, jailhouse, labor, clink
worn: (adj) haggard, tired, tattered, threadbare, ragged, drawn, jaded, fatigued, exhausted, faded, wasted. ANTONYMS: (adj) new, smart, unused, unworn, pristine, original
worrying: (adj) disturbing, disquieting, worrisome, troubling, troublesome, anxious, distressful, perturbing; (v) bothering, harassing; (n) harassment. ANTONYMS: (adj) soothing, relaxing, promising, slight
worship: (n) adoration, veneration, adulation, cult, homage; (n, v) reverence, respect, honor, revere, adore, glorify. ANTONYMS: (v) disrespect, dishonor, despise, deprecate, scorn; (n) disdain, disparagement, contempt, detestation
worshipped: (adj) adored, idolized, venerable
wound: (n, v) bruise, cut, harm, pain, damage, scratch, stab, sting; (n) injury; (v) offend, injure. ANTONYMS: (v) heal, appease, aid, cure, repair
wounded: (adj, v) hurt; (n) casualty, maimed; (adj) bruised, injured, bloody, aggrieved, saddened; (v) stricken, wound, struck. ANTONYM: (adj) unaffected
woven: (adj) plaited
wrapped: (prep) covered; (adj) clothed, draped, rapt, intent, absorbed, engrossed, mantled, packed, immersed; (adj, prep) cloaked
wrench: (n, v) pull, jerk, strain, turn, twist, tug, yank; (n) spanner; (v) distort, contort, force
wretched: (adj) unfortunate, pitiful, sad, pitiable, woeful, pathetic, piteous, lamentable; (adj, v) poor, unhappy, forlorn. ANTONYMS: (adj) fine, strong, fortunate, overjoyed, nice, admirable, good, cheery, joyous, lucky, comfortable
wrinkles: (n) crow's feet
wronged: (adj) upset, hurt, indignant, offended
wrongs: (n) mala
wrought: (adj) shaped, done, worked, worked up, formed
xiii: (n) long dozen, large integer
xvii: (n) large integer
xviii: (n) large integer
yarn: (n) story, thread, tale, narration, twine, anecdote, string, fable, relation, worsted, fiction
yearning: (n) hankering, aspiration, thirst, craving, desire, hunger, nostalgia, eagerness; (adj) wistful, pining, desirous. ANTONYMS: (adj) disinterested; (n) dislike, disinclination, apathy
yoke: (adj, n, v) couple, link; (n, v) pair, tie; (adj, n) brace; (v) connect, join, bind, attach; (n) coupling, team. ANTONYMS: (v) disconnect, disjoin
youngster: (n) lad, juvenile, kid, child, urchin, toddler, youth, adolescent, bairn, baby, tot. ANTONYMS: (n) adult, elder
youngsters: (n) teenagers, young people, youth
yourselves: (pron) themselves, myself, herself
youthful: (adj) immature, fresh, green, juvenile, vernal, adolescent, childish, new, tender, sappy, beardless. ANTONYMS: (adj) adult, mature, experienced, sophisticated, late
zealous: (adj) keen, enthusiastic, fervent, ardent, avid, devoted, strenuous, vehement, glowing, fiery; (adj, n) passionate. ANTONYMS: (adj) indifferent, apathetic, unenthusiastic, cool, halfhearted, moderate

Silas Marner

George Eliot



Silas Marner: El pastor de Raveloe (*Silas Marner: The Weaver of Raveloe*) es el título de la tercera novela de George Eliot (pseudónimo de Mary Ann Evans). Fue publicada por primera vez en 1861, y es considerada por la crítica como una de las mejores obras de la escritora.

Silas Marner, un humilde tejedor, huye de su ciudad natal acusado de un crimen que no ha cometido. Se asienta en Raveloe, una pequeña comunidad en la que trata de pasar desapercibido trabajando sin descanso y acumulando tanto dinero como lo es posible. Su carácter retraído y su existencia anodina se verán turbados por dos hechos extraordinarios que le acaecen el mismo día: el robo de sus ahorros y la aparición de una mujer muerta ante su hogar con un bebé en los brazos. Esos acontecimientos cambiarán la vida del tejedor y provocarán una serie de consecuencias imprevistas en el pequeño pueblo.

George Eliot

Silas Marner

El tejedor de Raveloe

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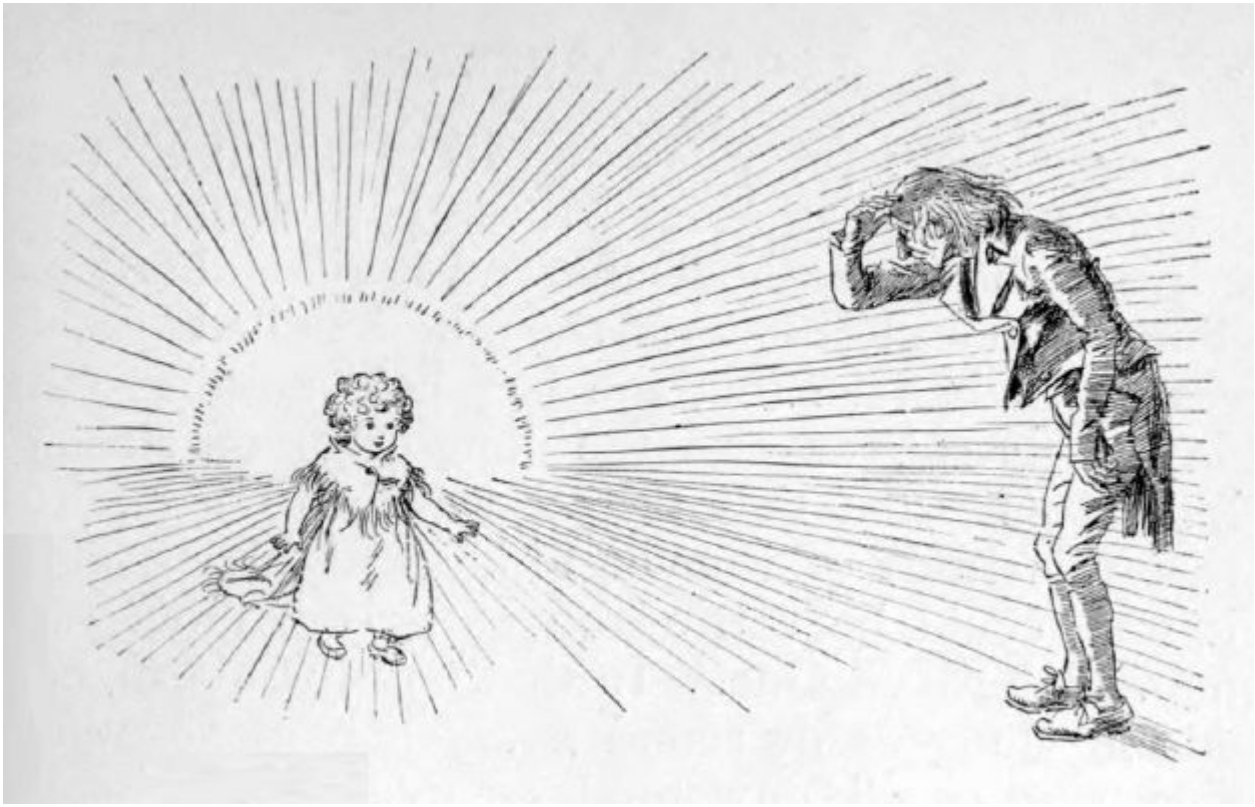
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«A child, more than all other gifts
That earth can offer to declining man,
Brings hope with it, and forward-looking thoughts».

Wordsworth[1]





PRIMERA PARTE

I

EN LOS tiempos en que las ruecas zumbaban activamente en las granjas, en que las mismas grandes damas, vestidas de sedas y encajes, tenían sus pequeñas ruecas de encina lustrada, a veces se veía, ya sea en los caminos de los distritos apartados, ya sea en el seno profundo de las colinas, a ciertos hombres pálidos y enclenques que, comparados con las gentes vigorosas de los campos, parecían ser los últimos vestigios de una raza desheredada.

El perro del pastor ladraba furioso cuando uno de esos hombres de fisonomía extraña aparecía en las alturas, y su fisonomía extraña se destacaba negra sobre el cielo, en el ocaso breve del sol de invierno; porque, ¿a qué perro no incomoda una persona encorvada bajo el peso de un fardo? Y aquellos hombres pálidos rara vez salían de su aldea sin aquella carga misteriosa.

El propio pastor, bien que tuviera buenas razones para creer que la bolsa sólo contenía hilo de lino, si no largas piezas de lienzo tejidas con ese hilo, no estaba muy seguro de que aquel oficio de tejedor, por indispensable que fuera, pudiera ejercerse sin el auxilio del espíritu maligno.

En aquella época remota, la superstición acompañaba a todo individuo o a todo hecho un tanto extraño. Y para que una cosa pareciera tal, bastaba que se repitiera periódica o accidentalmente, como las visitas del buhonero o del afilador.

Nadie sabía dónde vivían aquellos hombres errantes, ni de quién descendían; y, ¿cómo podría decirse quiénes eran, a menos de conocer a alguien que supiera quiénes eran su padre y su madre?

Para los campesinos de antaño, el mundo, más allá del horizonte de su experiencia personal, era una región vaga y misteriosa. Para su pensamiento, que se había quedado estacionario, una vida nómada era una concepción tan obscura como la existencia, durante el invierno, de las golondrinas que volvían en primavera. Pero el extranjero que se establecía definitivamente entre ellos, si procedía de una región lejana, no dejaba nunca de ser mirado con un resto de desconfianza. Esta circunstancia hubiera hecho que las gentes no se sorprendieran absolutamente, en el caso de que cometiera un crimen después de largos años de conducta inofensiva, particularmente si tenía cierta reputación de instruido, o si demostraba cierta habilidad en un oficio.

Todo talento, ya sea en el uso rápido de este instrumento de difícil manejo, la lengua, ya sea en algún otro arte poco familiar a los campesinos, era en sí mismo sospechoso; las gentes honradas, nacidas y criadas bajo la vista de todos, no eran, por lo general, ni muy instruidas ni muy hábiles —por lo menos su ciencia no se extendía más allá de los signos del cambio del tiempo—, y los medios de adquirir rapidez o habilidad en un arte cualquiera eran tan desconocidos, que esos talentos parecían tener algo de sortilegio. De ahí que esos tejedores dispersos —emigrados de la ciudad al campo—, eran considerados durante toda su vida como extranjeros por sus vecinos campesinos, y contraían generalmente los hábitos excéntricos, inherentes a una existencia solitaria.

En los primeros años del siglo pasado, uno de esos tejedores, llamado Silas Marner, ejercía su profesión en una choza construida de piedra, situada en medio de cercos de avellanos, cerca de la aldea de Raveloe, y no lejos de los bordes de una cantera abandonada. El ruido vago de su telar, tan diferente del trote natural y alegre de la máquina de cernir o del ritmo más simple del trillo de mano, ejercía un encanto casi terrible sobre los chicos de Raveloe, que con frecuencia dejaban de ir a recoger avellanas o buscar nidos, para ir a mirar por la ventana de la choza. El movimiento misterioso del telar les inspiraba cierto temor respetuoso; sin embargo, ese temor era compensado por un sentimiento agradable de superioridad desdeñosa que sentían, burlándose de los ruidos alternados de la máquina, así como del tejedor, cuya actitud se parecía a la del preso empleado en el molino de la disciplina.

A veces sucedía que Marner, al detenerse para arreglar algún hilo irregular, notaba la presencia de los

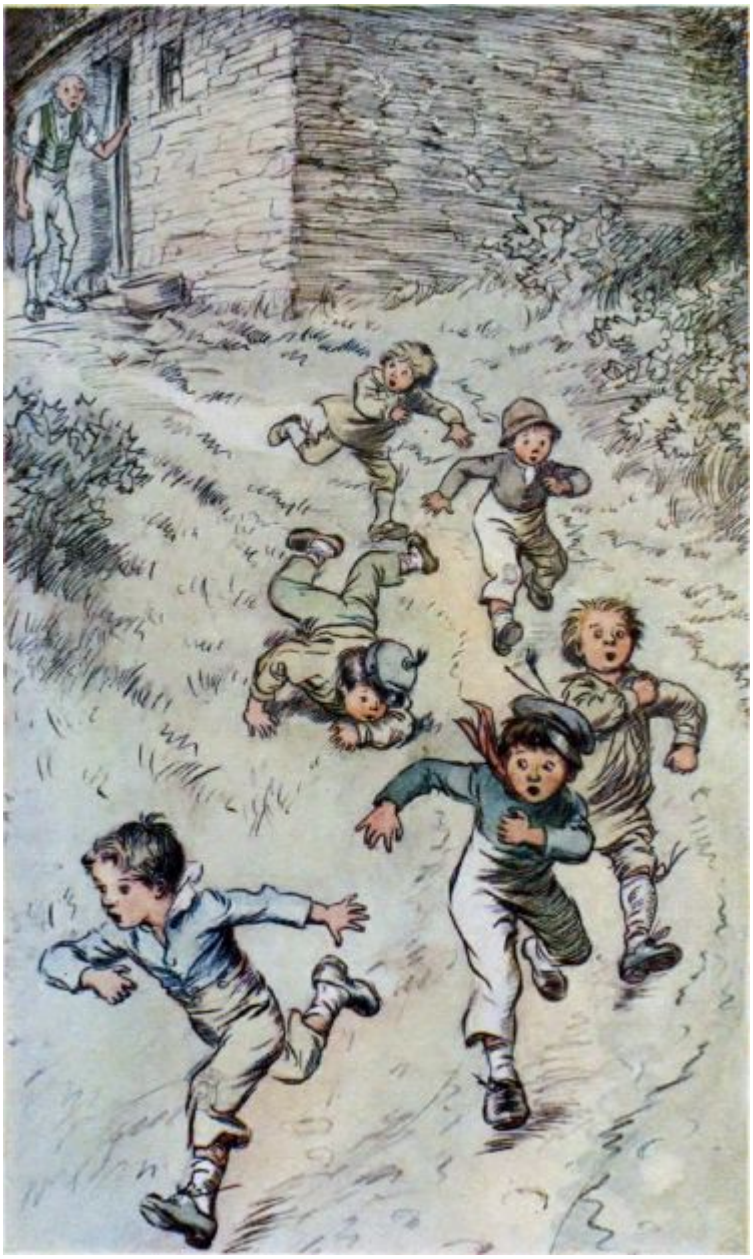
chicuelos. Aunque fuera avaro de su tiempo, le desagradaba tanto que lo importunaran aquellos intrusos, que bajaba de su telar, abría la puerta y fijaba en ellos una mirada que bastaba siempre para nacerlos huir asustados. Porque, ¿cómo podrían creer que aquellos ojos negros y saltones del pálido rostro de Silas Marner no vieran en realidad claramente más que los objetos muy próximos? ¿Cómo no creer más probable, que su mirada fija y espantosa pudiera darle un calambre, el raquitismo a todo niño que se quedara atrasado?

Quizá les habían oído decir a sus padres, a medias palabras, que Silas Marner podía curar el reumatismo si quería, y agregar, más misteriosamente aún, que, si se sabía captarse a aquel diablo, podía evitar los gastos de médico.

Tales ecos extraños y retardados del antiguo culto del demonio podrían ser notados todavía en nuestros días por quien escuchara hablar a los campesinos de cabellos blancos; porque el espíritu inculto asocia difícilmente la idea de poder con la bondad.

La concepción obscura de un poder del que se puede conseguir, mediante mucha persuasión, que se abstenga de hacer daño, es la forma que el sentimiento de lo invisible crea más fácilmente en el espíritu de los hombres que han estado siempre más urgidos por las primeras necesidades, y cuya vida de duro trabajo no ha sido nunca iluminada por el entusiasmo de ninguna fe religiosa.

El dolor y el infortunio ofrecen a esas gentes un dominio de posibilidades mucho más vasto que el de la alegría y el placer; el campo de su imaginación es casi estéril en imágenes que alimenten los deseos y las esperanzas, mientras que está cubierto de recuerdos que son el eterno pasto del temor. «¿No existe alguna cosa que os agradaría comer?», le preguntaron a un viejo campesino que estaba muy enfermo y que había rechazado todos los alimentos que su mujer le había ofrecido. «No —contestó—, nunca he estado acostumbrado más que al alimento ordinario y ya no lo puedo comer». Su género de vida no había despertado en él ningún deseo de evocar el fantasma del apetito.



Y Raveloe era un lugar en que muchos antiguos ecos se habían retrasado, sin que los ahogaran las voces nuevas. No es que fuera una de esas parroquias estériles, relegadas en los confines de la civilización, en las que vivían los flacos carneros y escasos pastores. Por el contrario, era una aldea situada en la rica llanura central del país que nos complacemos en llamar la Alegre Inglaterra, en la que había granjas que, consideradas del punto de vista espiritual, pagaban al clero diezmos muy deseables. Pero estaba situado en una hondonada tranquila y poblada de bosques, a una buena hora de todo camino para jinetes, en un sitio a que no podían llegar ni los toques del cuerno de la diligencia, ni los ecos de la opinión pública.

Era Raveloe una aldea de aspecto importante, en el corazón de la cual se alzaban una bella y antigua iglesia, con un vasto cementerio, así como dos o tres grandes edificios construidos de piedra y ladrillo, cuyos techos estaban adornados con veletas y los huertos bien cercados de paredes. Esas habitaciones estaban situadas junto al camino, y sus fachadas se erguían con más majestad que el presbiterio, cuya cima emergía en medio de los árboles, del otro lado del cementerio. Raveloe era una parroquia que indicaba en seguida la categoría de sus principales habitantes. Informaba al ojo experimentado que no había gran parque ni castillo en el vecindario, pero que contaba con varios jefes de familia que podían, a su capricho, malbaratar sus tierras, sacando, sin embargo, en aquellos tiempos de guerra, bastante dinero de su mala explotación, como para llevar vida holgada y celebrar alegremente las fiestas de Navidad, de la de Pentecostés y de Pascuas. Hacía ya quince años que Silas Marner vivía en Raveloe. No era, cuando allí llegó, más que un joven pálido, de ojos negros, salientes y miopes, cuya fisonomía no hubiera tenido nada de extraño para gentes de cultura y experiencia comunes; pero para los campesinos, entre los que había ido a establecerse, tenía algo de particular y misterioso que respondía a la naturaleza excepcional de su profesión, y a su llegada de una región desconocida, llamada «el norte».

Lo propio pasaba con su modo de vivir; no invitaba nunca a nadie a que salvara su umbral, y no salía nunca a vagar por la aldea para beber un jarro de cerveza en la taberna del *Arco Iris* o charlar en casa del carretonero.

No buscaba nunca a hombre ni a mujer como no fuera para las necesidades de su profesión, o a fin de proporcionarse lo que necesitaba, y las mozas de Raveloe pronto se persuadieron de que jamás obligaría a ninguna a casarse con él contra su voluntad, tal cual si las hubiera oído declarar que no se casarían nunca con un muerto resucitado.

Esta manera de considerar la persona de Marner no era otro motivo que la palidez de su rostro y sus ojos singulares, porque Jacobo Rodney, el matador de topos, afirmaba lo que sigue: Una tarde, al volver a su casa, había visto a Silas apoyado contra una cerca, con el pesado fardo al hombro, en lugar de colocarlo sobre la cerca, como hubiera hecho un hombre que estuviera en su juicio; después, al acercarse, vio que los ojos del tejedor estaban inmóviles como los de un muerto; en seguida le habló, lo sacudió y notó que sus miembros estaban rígidos, y que las manos apretaban el saco como si fuesen de hierro; pero, precisamente en el momento en que acababa de convencerse de que Marner estaba muerto, éste recobró sus sentidos, le dio las buenas noches y se marchó.

Rodney juraba que había sido testigo de todo esto; y era tanto más creíble cuanto que agregaba que la cosa había sucedido el mismo día en que había ido a cazar topos en la sierra del *squire* Gass, allá cerca del viejo foso de los aserradores.

Algunas personas decían que Marner debía haber tenido un «ataque», palabra que parecía explicar cosas de otro modo increíbles; pero el señor Macey, gran argumentador y chantre de la parroquia, sacudía la cabeza con incredulidad, y preguntaba si se había visto nunca a nadie perder sus facultades sin que rodara al suelo. Un ataque era una parálisis, no cabía duda, y era propio de la parálisis privar en parte a un individuo del uso de sus miembros, quedando a cargo de la parroquia, si no tenía hijos para ir en su ayuda.

No, no; una parálisis no deja a un hombre firme sobre las piernas, como un caballo entre las varas de un carro, ni le dejaría luego marcharse, así que se le pudiera decir «¡arre!». Pero quizá hubiera algo así como que el alma del hombre, que se librara del cuerpo, saliera y entrara, lo mismo que un pájaro que sale y vuelve a su nido. Así era como las gentes se volvían muy instruidas, porque libres entonces de su envoltura corporal iban a la escuela de los que podían enseñarles más cosas de las que sus vecinos podían aprender con ayuda de sus cinco sentidos y del pastor. Y, ¿dónde había adquirido maese Marner su conocimiento de las plantas y también el de los hechizos, cuando se le ocurría darlos? No había nada en lo que contaba Jacobo Rodney capaz de sorprender a los que habían visto cómo Marner había curado a Sally Oates, y la había hecho dormir como un niño, cuando el corazón de aquella mujer latía como para partirle el pecho desde hacía dos meses y más que la asistía el doctor.

Marner era capaz de curar otras personas si quería; en todo caso era bueno hablarle, con suavidad, siquiera para evitar que hiciera daño.

A ese temor vago debía Marner en parte el estar al abrigo de las persecuciones que su singularidad hubiera podido atraerle; pero más aún lo debía a una circunstancia particular. El viejo tejedor de Tarley, parroquia próxima a Raveloe, había muerto; por lo tanto, la profesión de Silas, cuando se estableció, hizo que fuera el bien venido para las más ricas señoras de los alrededores, y aún para las campesinas más previsoras, que tenían, al fin del año, su pequeña provisión de hilo.

La utilidad que le reconocían, hubiera neutralizado toda repugnancia o toda sospecha a su respecto, que no fuera conformada por falta en la calidad o cantidad del tejido que les hacía.



Transcurrieron los años sin producir ningún cambio en la impresión que causara en los vecinos, a no ser el paso de la novedad a la costumbre.

Al cabo de quince años, las gentes de Raveloe decían de Marner exactamente las mismas cosas que al principio; no las decían tan a menudo, pero creían tan firmemente en ellas cuando les acontecía decirlas. Los años sólo habían agregado un hecho importante, a saber: que maese Marner había juntado en algunas partes una bonita suma de dinero, y que si quisiera podría comprar los bienes de los que se daban más importancia que él.

Pero, mientras que la opinión pública había permanecido casi estacionaria a su respecto, y que los hábitos cotidianos no habían presentado cambios apreciables, la vida interior del tejedor había tenido su historia o su metamorfosis, como la vida interior de toda naturaleza ardiente, que ha buscado la soledad o que ha sido condenada a ella, debe tener necesariamente la suya. Su existencia, antes de su llegada a Raveloe, había estado llena por el movimiento, la actividad del espíritu y las relaciones íntimas que en ese tiempo, como en nuestros días, distinguían la existencia de un artesano incorporado desde temprano en una secta religiosa, de miras estrechas, en que el laico más pobre tiene probabilidades de hacerse notar por el talento o la palabra, y en la que por lo menos influye su voto silencioso en el gobierno de la comunidad.

Marner era muy estimado por aquel pequeño mundo que, para sus miembros, constituía el Patio de la Linterna. Se le consideraba como un joven de vida ejemplar y de una fe ardiente; y un interés popular se había concentrado siempre en él, después que en una reunión piadosa había caído en un estado misterioso de rigidez y de insensibilidad, estado en que había permanecido una hora o más, y que había creído fuera la muerte.

Si se hubiera tratado de darle a aquel fenómeno una explicación médica, aquello hubiera sido considerado por el mismo Silas, por el pastor y los demás miembros de la congregación, como un abandono voluntario del significado espiritual, que podía explicar el hecho. Silas era evidentemente un hermano elegido para un ministerio particular, y bien que los esfuerzos para interpretar su naturaleza fueran desalentados por la ausencia de toda visión espiritual durante su éxtasis exterior, sin embargo, creía como los demás que el resultado se manifestaba en su alma por un aumento de luz y de fervor.

Un hombre menos sincero que Marner se hubiera sentido tentado a crear en seguida una visión que tuviera apariencias de remembranza, y un espíritu menos sano hubiera podido creer en semejante creación. Pero Silas era a la vez sano de espíritu y honrado; sólo que en él, como en muchos hombres fervientes y sinceros, la cultura intelectual no había trazado un curso particular al sentimiento religioso, de manera que éste se esparcía por la vía reservada a la investigación y a la ciencia.

Había heredado de su madre un cierto conocimiento de las plantas medicinales y de su preparación, pequeño caudal de sabiduría que ella le había transmitido como un legado solemne. Sin embargo, desde hacía algunos años tenía dudas respecto al derecho de usar de aquella ciencia, creyendo que las plantas no podían hacer ningún efecto sin el rezo y que el rezo debía bastar sin las plantas; así es que sus delicias hereditarias de vagar por los campos para recoger la digital, el acónito y el nastuerzo, comenzaron a revestir ante sus ojos las formas de la tentación.

Entre los miembros de su iglesia se encontraba un joven algo mayor que él, con el que vivía desde hacía tiempo en una amistad tan íntima, que los hermanos del Patio de la Linterna tenían la costumbre de llamarlos David y Jonatás. El verdadero nombre de ese amigo era William Dane. Él era considerado igualmente como un modelo de piedad juvenil, bien que estuviera dispuesto a mostrarse un tanto severo con los hermanos más jóvenes que él, y a deslumbrarse tanto con sus propias luces, que se creía más sabio que sus maestros.

Pero, sea cuales fueran las imperfecciones que otros descubrieran en William, en el espíritu de su amigo era perfecto, porque Marner era una de esas naturalezas impresionables y que dudan de sí mismas que, en la edad de corta experiencia, admiran la autoridad y se forman un apoyo en la contradicción.

La expresión de sencillez confiada de la fisonomía de Marner —expresión realzada por la ausencia de observación propia, por la mirada sin defensa, mirada de ciervo, que pertenece a los grandes ojos prominentes— formaba un contraste chocante con la represión voluntaria de la satisfacción interior, que se disimulaba apenas en los pequeños ojos oblicuos y en los labios contraídos de William Dane.

Uno de los temas de la conversación más frecuente entre los dos amigos, era la certidumbre de esa salvación: Silas confesaba que no podía llegar nunca más que una mezcla de esperanza y de temor, y escuchaba a William con una admiración llena de deseo, cuando éste declaraba que había tenido siempre la convicción inquebrantable de su salvación, desde que en la época de su conversación, había soñado que las palabras «llamado y sin duda elegido» se presentaban ante sus ojos sobre una página blanca de la Biblia abierta. Diálogos así han ocupado a más de una pareja de tejedores, de rostro pálido, cuyas almas incultas

parecían pequeñas criaturas recientemente aladas, revoloteando abandonadas en el crepúsculo.

Habíale parecido al confiado Silas que su amistad no se había enfriado, aun después que un nuevo afecto, de naturaleza más íntima, había brotado en su corazón.

Desde hacía algunos meses estaba comprometido con una joven sirvienta y los dos no esperaban para casarse más que el momento en que sus economías fueran bastante grandes. Silas tenía vivo placer en que Sara no hiciera ninguna objeción a la presencia accidental de William durante sus entrevistas de los domingos. Fue en esa época de su vida que tuvo lugar el ataque de catalepsia durante la reunión piadosa. Entre las preguntas y las muestras de interés que los miembros de la congregación le dirigieron o le expresaron, sólo la opinión sugerida por William estuvo en desacuerdo con la simpatía general, demostrada a un hermano así elegido para un ministerio particular. Hizo observar que, a su entender, aquel éxtasis más bien se parecía a una manifestación de Satanás, que a una prueba del favor divino, y exhortó a su amigo a que buscara si no ocultaba nada maldito en su corazón.

Silas, sintiéndose obligado a aceptar la censura y la advertencia como un servicio fraternal, no tuvo ningún resentimiento. Sólo sintió al ver las dudas que William alimentaba a su respecto. A esto vino a agregarse una cierta inquietud, cuando descubrió que la conducta de Sara para con él comenzaba a traicionar una extraña fluctuación: ora hacía esfuerzos para demostrarle mayor afecto, ora dejaba notar signos involuntarios de repulsión y de hastío. Silas le preguntó si deseaba romper su compromiso; pero ella dijo que no; el compromiso era conocido en la iglesia y había sido confirmado en las reuniones piadosas. Para romperlo hubiera sido necesario hacer una encuesta severa, y Sara no tenía ninguna razón que dar, que pudiera ser sancionada por el sentimiento de la comunidad.

Por esa época, el decano de los diáconos cayó gravemente enfermo. Como era viudo y sin hijos fue cuidado noche y día por los hermanos y hermanas más jóvenes de la comunidad. Silas y William iban con frecuencia a velar durante la noche, reemplazando el uno al otro a las dos de la mañana. El anciano, contra lo que todos creían, parecía estar en vías de salvarse, cuando una noche Silas, sentado a la cabecera del enfermo, notó que la respiración de éste, que era generalmente perceptible, había cesado. La vela estaba casi consumida; tuvo que incorporarse para ver claramente el rostro del diácono. Aquel examen lo persuadió de que el anciano estaba muerto, muerto desde hacía algún rato, porque sus miembros estaban rígidos.

Silas se preguntó si no se habría dormido y miró el reloj; eran ya las cuatro de la mañana. ¿Cómo era que William no había ido? Lleno de inquietud fue a buscar socorro.

Muy luego, varios amigos, y entre ellos el pastor, se encontraron reunidos en la casa. Por su parte, Silas volvió a su casa, sintiendo no haber encontrado a William para saber el motivo de su ausencia. Pero a eso de las seis de la mañana, cuando pensaba en ir a buscar a su amigo, llegó William, y el pastor junto con él.

Iban a invitar a Marner para que fuera al Patio de la Linterna, a la asamblea de los miembros de la congregación.

Como preguntara la causa de aquella convocatoria, se le dijo simplemente: «Ahora lo sabréis».

No se pronunció una palabra más, antes de que Silas estuviera sentado en la sacristía, frente al pastor y bajo las miradas fijas y solemnes de aquellos que, ante sus ojos, representaban al pueblo de Dios.

Entonces el pastor, sacando un cuchillo del bolsillo, se lo mostró a Silas, preguntándole si recordaba dónde había dejado aquel cuchillo.

Silas respondió que no recordaba haberlo dejado en otra parte más que en su bolsillo; sin embargo, aquella extraña interrogación lo hizo estremecer.

Se le exhortó a que no ocultara su pecado, y que lo confesara y arrepintiera. El cuchillo había sido encontrado cerca del difunto diácono, en el sitio en que había depositado la bolsa que contenía el dinero de la iglesia, y que el propio pastor había visto el día precedente. Alguien se había llevado la bolsa, y, ¿quién podía ser, sino aquél a quien pertenecía el cuchillo? Durante un rato Silas permaneció mudo de sorpresa. Después dijo:

—Dios me justificará; nada sé respecto de la presencia de mi cuchillo en ese sitio, ni de la desaparición del dinero. Registradme, registrad mi casa: no encontraréis más que tres libras esterlinas y cinco chelines, fruto de mis economías, suma que poseo desde hace seis meses, como William lo sabe.

Al oír estas palabras, William produjo un murmullo de desaprobación; pero el pastor le dijo a Silas:

—Las pruebas para vos son aplastadoras, mi hermano Marner. El dinero ha sido sacado esta noche, y no había más persona que vos junto a nuestro hermano difunto; porque William Dane nos ha declarado que una indisposición repentina le impidió ir a reemplazaros, como de costumbre. Vos mismo declarasteis que no habíais ido, y además, abandonasteis el cuerpo del difunto.

—Es forzoso que me haya dormido —dijo Silas—, o bien que haya estado bajo la influencia de una

manifestación espiritual parecida a aquella de que fui objeto ante los ojos de todos vosotros, de modo que el ladrón debe haber entrado y salido mientras yo no estaba en mi cuerpo; pero sí mi cuerpo. Sin embargo, lo repito otra vez; buscad en mi casa, porque no he ido a otra parte.

Se hizo el registro, el cual terminó con el descubrimiento que hizo Silas de la bolsa vacía y escondida tras de la cómoda, en el cuarto de Silas. Después de esto, William exhortó a su hermano a confesar su falta, y a no ocultarla más largo tiempo. Silas dirigió a su amigo una mirada de vivo reproche, diciéndole:

—William, desde hace nueve años que vivimos juntos, ¿me habéis oído nunca decir una mentira? Pero Dios me justificará.

—Mi hermano —le dijo William—, ¿cómo hubiera podido saber lo que habéis hecho en las celdas secretas de nuestro corazón, para darle a Satanás ventajas sobre vos?

Silas miraba a su amigo. De pronto un vivo sonrojo se esparció por su rostro, e iba a hablar con impetuosidad, cuando una conmoción interior, que disipó aquel sonrojo y le hizo temblar, pareció detenerle de nuevo.

—En fin, —dijo con voz débil, mirando fijamente a William—. Ahora me acuerdo, el cuchillo no estaba en mi bolsillo.

William respondió:

—No sé lo que queréis decir.

Entretanto, las otras personas presentes se pusieron a preguntar a Silas Marner dónde, según él, se encontraba el cuchillo; pero no quiso dar otra explicación. Agregó solamente:

—Estoy cruelmente herido, no puedo decir nada. Dios me justificará.

La asamblea, de regreso en la sacristía, deliberó nuevamente. Toda apelación a las medidas legales, con el fin de establecer la culpabilidad de Silas, era contraria a los principios de la iglesia del Patio de la Linterna. Según esos principios, era prohibido recurrir a la justicia contra los cristianos, aun cuando el hecho resultara menos escandaloso para la comunidad. Sin embargo, era obligación de sus miembros el tomar otras medidas a fin de descubrir la verdad, y resolvieron orar y «echar la suerte».

Esta resolución sólo sorprenderá a las personas extrañas a esa obscura vida religiosa que se desarrolla en las callejuelas de nuestras ciudades. Silas se arrodilló junto con sus hermanos, contando con la intervención directa de la divinidad para probar su inocencia; pero sintiendo que, a pesar de todo, tendría que sufrir aflicciones y dolores, y que su confianza en la humanidad acababa de ser cruelmente herida. La suerte declaró que Silas Marner era culpable. Fue solamente excluido de la secta, y se le compelió a devolver el dinero robado; sólo cuando confesara su falta, en señal de arrepentimiento, podría ser recibido de nuevo en el seno de la Iglesia. Marner escuchó en silencio.

Por último, cuando todos se levantaron para marcharse, Silas se adelantó hacia William Dane, y, con voz que la agitación hacía temblar, dijo:

—La última vez que me serví de mi cuchillo, lo recuerdo bien, fue para cortaros una tira de lienzo. No recuerdo haberlo vuelto a mi bolsillo. Sois vos quien habéis robado el dinero y urdido un complot para atribuirme ese pecado. Pero a pesar de eso podréis prosperar; no existe un Dios de justicia que gobierne la tierra con equidad; sólo existe un Dios de mentira, que da falsos testimonios contra el inocente.

Aquella blasfemia produjo una impresión de horror general.

William dijo con humildad:

—Dejo a mis hermanos la tarea de que juzguen si ésta es o no la voz de Satanás. Sólo puedo rogar por vos, Silas.

El pobre Marner salió con esta desesperación en el alma; con este desengaño en la confianza puesta en Dios y en la humanidad, que casi raya en la locura de una naturaleza afectuosa. Con el corazón amargamente herido, se dijo: «Ella también me rechazará». Y pensó que si Sara no creía en el testimonio dado contra él, toda la fe de aquella joven tenía que subvertirse como la suya.

Para las personas acostumbradas a razonar respecto de las formas que sus sentimientos religiosos han revestido, es difícil darse cuenta de ese estado simple y natural en que la forma y el sentimiento no han sido separados nunca por un acto de reflexión. Nos sentimos inevitablemente inclinados a creer que un hombre, en la situación de Marner, hubiera comenzado por poner en duda la validez de un llamamiento hecho a la justicia divina tirando a la suerte. Pero no hubiera sido para él un esfuerzo de libre pensamiento tal como jamás lo había intentado; y hubiera tenido que hacer ese esfuerzo en un momento en que toda su energía se hallaba absorbida por las angustias de su fe perdida. Si hay un ángel que registre los dolores y los pecados de los hombres, tiene que saber cuán numerosos e intensos son los pesares que causan las ideas falsas, de que nadie es culpable.

Marner se volvió a su casa. Durante un día entero permaneció sentado, solo, aturdido por la

desesperación, sin sentir ningún deseo de ir a ver a Sara para tratar de hacerle creer en su inocencia.

El segundo día, buscó un refugio contra la incredulidad que lo amodorraba, sentándose en su telar y poniéndose a trabajar sin reposo, como de costumbre.

Pocas horas después, el pastor, acompañado por uno de los diáconos, iba a llevarle un mensaje de Sara, informándole que ella consideraba roto su compromiso con él. Silas recibió el mensaje en silencio. Apartando en seguida la mirada que había fijado en los mensajeros, volvió a ponerse al trabajo.

Al cabo de un mes Sara casó con William Dane, y muy luego, los hermanos del Patio de la Linterna supieron que Silas Marner había abandonado la ciudad.

II

ES ALGUNAS veces difícil, aun a las personas cuya existencia ha sido amplificada por la instrucción, el mantener con firmeza sus opiniones sobre la vida, su fe en lo invisible, y el sentimiento que realmente les causaran las alegrías y los pesares del pasado, cuando son bruscamente trasladados a otro país.

Porque allí, las gentes que los rodean no saben nada a su respecto y no comparten ninguna de sus ideas; allí, además, la madre tierra, presenta otro seno, y la vida humana reviste otras formas que aquellas que alimentaron sus corazones.

Las almas arrancadas a su antigua fe y a sus antiguos afectos, han buscado quizá esa influencia del destierro, que, como el agua de Leteo, borra el pasado. Ella lo torna confuso, porque aquellos símbolos se han desvanecido, y también torna vago el presente, porque no lo sostiene ningún recuerdo. Pero, ni aun la experiencia de esas almas les permite figurarse claramente lo que sintió un simple tejedor como Silas Marner, cuando abandonó su pueblo y sus amigos para irse a establecer a Raveloe.

Nada más distinto de su ciudad natal, situada en una de las faldas de las colinas que se extendían a lo lejos, como aquella región baja y boscosa, en que los cercos y los árboles de follaje espeso la ocultaban a la vista del cielo.

Cuando se levantaba, en la tranquilidad profunda de la mañana, miraba afuera las zarzas cubiertas de rocío, y las matas vigorosas de hierbas; no veía nada que pudiese tener relación con aquella vida concentrada en el Patio de la Linterna, aquella vida que antes era el santuario de las altas dispensaciones en su favor. Los muros blanqueados; los pequeños bancos, en que las personas que se tenía costumbre de ver entraban evitando el roce de sus vestidos, y donde una primera vez bien conocida, y luego otra y otra, hacían su pequeña oración, cada una en su tono particular, pronunciando frases ocultas y familiares, como el amuleto llevado sobre el corazón; el púlpito en que se postran, inclinándose hacia un lado y otro, hojeando la Biblia según su costumbre, dispersaba una doctrina incontestada; hasta las pausas entre las estrofas del himno, mientras que se lo leía, y la elevación intermitente de la voz durante el canto; todo eso había sido para Marner el camino de las influencias divinas; era el alimento y el refugio de sus emociones religiosas, el cristianismo y el reino de Dios en la tierra.

Un tejedor que encuentra frases difíciles de comprender en su libro de himnos, no sabe nada de las abstracciones: es como el niño que nada sabe del amor maternal, y no conoce más que un rostro y un seno hacia los cuales tiende los brazos para buscar en ellos un refugio y alimento.

¿Y qué cosa podrá haber más distinta en aquel mundo del Patio de la Linterna que aquel mundo de Raveloe? Pastores que parecían vivir la ociosidad en medio de una abundancia descuidada; la gran iglesia rodeada de un vasto cementerio, y que los aldeanos miraban vagando delante de sus puertas durante los oficios; los cortijeros de rostro rubicundo, los unos caminando lentamente por las calles; los otros entrando a la taberna del *Arco Iris*, habitaciones en que los hombres cenaban copiosamente y dormían de noche a la luz del hogar, y donde, las mujeres parecían acopiar una provisión de ropa para la vida futura.

No había labios en Raveloe que pudieran dejar caer una palabra capaz de despertar la fe adormecida de Marner, y hacer experimentar una sensación de dolor.

En las primeras edades del mundo, como es sabido, se creía que cada territorio estaba habitado y gobernado por sus propias divinidades. Así es que un hombre que atravesara las alturas limítrofes, podía encontrarse fuera del alcance de los dioses de su país, cuya presencia estaba confinada en las corrientes de agua, en las colinas y en el seno de los sotos, en cuyo seno había vivido desde su nacimiento. Y el pobre Silas sentía algo que no carecía de parecido con los sentimientos de esos hombres primitivos, cuando, impulsado por el miedo o por su humor sombrío, huían de ese modo las miradas de una divinidad enemiga.

Le parecía que el poder en que había puesto en vano su confianza, en las calles de su ciudad y en las

reuniones piadosas, se encontraba muy lejos de aquella tierra en que se había refugiado, en que los hombres vivían despreocupados, en la abundancia, sin saber nada y sin sentir la necesidad de aquella confianza que para él se había convertido en amargura. Las pocas luces que poseía esparcían sus rayos tan débilmente, que su creencia perdida formaba una niebla bastante espesa como para formar en su alma las tinieblas de la noche.

Su primer movimiento, después del choque, fue ponerse a trabajar.

Después continuó en la labor sin remisión. Ahora ya no se preguntaba para qué había ido a Raveloe; tejía hasta altas horas de la noche para acabar la pieza de lienzo de mesa que le encargara la señora Osgood antes de la fecha prometida, sin pensar en el dinero que se le daría por su trabajo.

Parecía tejer como la araña, por instinto, sin reflexión. El trabajo que todo hombre prosigue con asiduidad, tiende, de ese modo, a volverse un fin por sí mismo, haciéndole salvar de este modo los vacíos sin atractivos de su existencia. La mano de Silas se complacía en manejar la lanzadera, y sus ojos se distraían al ver los pequeños cuadros del tejido completarse bajo sus esfuerzos.

Además, había que satisfacer las exigencias del hambre, y Silas, en su soledad, tenía que proporcionarse su desayuno, su almuerzo, y su comida, ir a buscar agua al pozo y poner la olla sobre el fuego. Todas esas necesidades imperiosas, junto con el trabajo en el telar, contribuían a reducir su vida a la actividad ciega de un insecto tejedor. Odiaba la idea del pasado, nada lo impulsaba a amar a los extraños en medio de los cuales vivía, o asociarse con ellos; y el porvenir sólo era tinieblas, porque ningún amor invisible pesaba en él. Sus pensamientos estaban detenidos por una perplejidad completa, ahora que su camino estrecho de antaño estaba cerrado, y sus efectos parecían haber sido aniquilados por el golpe que había lacerado sus fibras más sensibles.

Por fin, el lienzo de mesa de la señora Osgood fue terminado, y Silas recibió oro en pago. Su ganancia, en su ciudad natal, donde trabajaba para un mayorista, era menos que en Raveloe; se le pagaba por semana, y una gran parte de aquel salario hebdomadario se iba en obras de piedad y de caridad. Ahora, por primera vez en su vida, le habían puesto cinco hermosas guineas en la mano; nadie se proponía compartirlas con él, y él no quería lo bastante a ningún hombre para ofrecerle una parte. Pero ¿qué valor tenían las guineas ante los ojos de Marner, que no veía más perspectiva que la de innumerables días de trabajo en su telar?

Era inútil que se hiciera esta pregunta, porque le era agradable recibirlas en el hueco de su mano y mirar sus efigies brillantes. Eran suyas por completo: constituían otro elemento de su existencia, análogo al trabajo y a la satisfacción del hombre, un elemento de naturaleza completamente extraño a la vida de creencia y de amor de que estaba privado.

El tejedor había conocido el contacto del dinero penosamente ganado, aun antes de que la palma de su mano se hubiera desarrollado por completo.

Durante años, el dinero misterioso había sido para él un símbolo de los bienes terrenales y el objeto inmediato del trabajo.

Marner parecía estimarlo poco en los días en que cada penique tenía para él su destino; porque ese destino, lo amaba entonces. Pero ahora que todo objeto había desaparecido, aquel hábito de esperar el dinero y de recibirle con el sentimiento del esfuerzo cumplido, formaba un suelo bastante profundo para recibir las semillas del deseo; así fue que Silas, al volver a su casa a través de los campos, durante el crepúsculo, sacó el dinero de su bolsillo y le pareció que brillaba más en la obscuridad creciente.

Por esta época se produjo un incidente que pareció hacer posibles las relaciones amistosas entre él y sus vecinos. Un día que llevaba a remendar un par de zapatos, vio a la mujer del zapatero sentada junto al fuego, presa de los síntomas terribles de una enfermedad al corazón y de la hidropesía, síntomas que Silas había observado en su propia madre y que habían sido los anunciadores de su muerte.

Aquella vista y aquel recuerdo le inspiraron un arranque de piedad.

Recordó el alivio que la enferma había sentido tomando una preparación sencilla de digital, le prometió a Sally Oates que le llevaría algo que le haría bien, puesto que las medicinas del doctor no la mejoraban. Al hacer aquel acto de caridad, Silas sintió por primera vez, desde su llegada a Raveloe, un sentimiento que, al unir su vida presente a su vida pasada, hubiera podido comenzar a librarlo de aquella especie de existencia de insecto, en que su naturaleza había degenerado.

Entretanto, la enfermedad de Sally Oates lo había elevado al rango de un personaje muy interesante, muy importante en el vecindario, y el hecho de que había mejorado bebiendo la droga de Silas, se volvió un tema general de conversación. Cuando el doctor Kimble recetaba una medicina, era natural que produjera su efecto; pero cuando un tejedor, que venía no se sabe de dónde, hacía maravillas con un frasco de agua parda, el carácter oculto del procedimiento se volvía evidente. No se había visto nada parecido desde la muerte de la bruja de Tarley, y ésta lo mismo se servía de drogas que de hechizos. Todos iban a verla

cuando los niños tenían convulsiones. Silas Marner debía ser una persona como ella; porque, ¿cómo sabía lo que le devolvería la respiración a Sally Oates, si no poseía algo más que eso? La bruja conocía palabras que murmuraba muy despacio, de modo que no se le podía oír nada. Si al mismo tiempo ataba un hilo encarnado alrededor del dedo gordo del pie del niño, éste quedaba libre de la hidropesía del cerebro. Había además en Raveloe unas mujeres que habían usado unas almohadillas de la bruja, atadas al cuello, lo que dio por resultado que nunca tuvieran un hijo idiota como el de Ana Coulter. Silas Marner era probablemente capaz de hacer otro tanto, y aun más; ahora se veía muy bien por qué había venido de un país desconocido, y por qué tenía una fisonomía tan rara. Pero era preciso que Sally Oates no se lo fuera a decir al señor Kimble, porque el doctor no tomaría a bien lo que había hecho Marner. Siempre estaba irritado contra la bruja, y amenazaba a los que iban a consultarle con no volverlos a asistir.

Silas se vio entonces bruscamente asaltado en su choza, ya sea por madres que deseaban que, por medio de sortilegios, les curara la tos convulsa a sus hijos, o que a ellas mismas les hiciera bajar la leche; ya sea por hombres que necesitaban drogas contra los reumatismos o los nudos en los dedos.

Para evitar una negativa, los solicitantes llevaban dinero en el hueco de la mano.

Silas hubiera podido hacer un proficuo comercio con sus hechizos supuestos y su pequeña lista de drogas; pero el dinero ganado de ese modo no le tentaba.

Nunca había tenido malas inclinaciones, y con irritación creciente, despedía a las gentes unas tras otras, porque la noticia de que era brujo se había esparcido hasta Tarley; así es que transcurrió mucho tiempo antes de que se dejara de hacer largos trayectos con el objeto de pedirle ayuda.

Entonces, la esperanza en su poder oculto se convirtió en temor. No se le creía absolutamente cuando afirmaba que no conocía hechizos, y que no podía hacer curas, y toda persona, hombre o mujer, que tenía un ataque o le ocurría un accidente después de haberse dirigido a él, atribuía aquella desgracia a las miradas irritadas de maese Marner. De modo que aquel movimiento de piedad por Sally Oates, que le había inspirado un sentimiento efímero de fraternidad, aumentó la repulsión que existía entre él y sus vecinos, volviendo más completo su aislamiento.

Poco a poco las guineas, las coronas y las medias coronas se fueron amontonando, y Marner fue sacando cada vez menos para sus necesidades, tratando de resolver el problema de conservar bastantes fuerzas para trabajar diez y seis horas diarias, gastando lo menos posible. ¿No hay hombres que, encerrados en la soledad de una cárcel, han encontrado alguna distracción en marcar el curso del tiempo en las paredes, trazando líneas rectas de cierto largo, hasta que el aumento de esas líneas, formando triángulos, se volviera en ellas un objeto predominante? ¿No engañamos las horas de ocio o las impaciencias de la espera repitiendo algún movimiento o algún sonido insignificante hasta que esa repetición crea en nosotros una necesidad, que es el origen de un hábito?

Eso nos ayudará a comprender cómo la costumbre de juntar dinero se vuelve una pasión absorbente en aquellos hombres, cuya imaginación no les muestra más objetivo que su tesoro cuando empiezan a aglomerarlo.

Marner deseaba ver las pilas de a diez formar un cuadrado, luego un cuadrado más grande; y cada guinea agregada, siendo en sí misma una satisfacción creaba un nuevo deseo. En este extraño mundo, que se había vuelto para él un enigma indescifrable, hubiera podido, si hubiera tenido una naturaleza menos ardiente, sentarse frente a su bastidor y trabajar sin tregua, pensando en la realización de su propósito y de su tela, hasta olvidar el enigma y todo lo demás, excepto, las sensaciones del momento; pero el dinero había venido a dividir su trabajo en períodos, y no solamente aquel dinero aumentaba, sino que se quedaba con él. Comenzó a creer que el metal, lo mismo que el telar, tenía conciencia de su poseedor, y por nada hubiera querido cambiar esas monedas, que se habían vuelto sus íntimas, por otras de efigies desconocidas.

Las apilaba, las contaba, hasta que su forma y su color produjeran en él efecto agradable del aplacamiento de la sed. Sin embargo, sólo era por la noche, cuando había concluido su trabajo, que las sacaba para gozar de su compañía.

Había sacado unos ladrillos del suelo, debajo del telar, y había hecho un agujero en el que colocó la olla de hierro que contenía las guineas y las monedas de plata. Cubría los ladrillos con arena siempre que los volvía a colocar en su sitio.

No era que la idea del robo se presentara a menudo o claramente a su espíritu. En esa época, no era raro que en los distritos de provincia se procediera como lo hacía Marner; era cosa sabida que había campesinos en la parroquia de Raveloe, que guardaban sus economías en sus casas, probablemente escondidas en sus colchones de lana; pero sus místicos vecinos, bien que no fueran todos tan honrados como sus antecesores de los tiempos del rey Alfredo, no tenían imaginación bastante atrevida como para premeditar un robo con efracción. Y, ¿cómo hubiera podido gastar el dinero en su aldea sin traicionarse? Se hubieran visto

obligados a fugarse, resolución tan ciega y tan temeraria como la de viajar en globo.

Así, año tras año, Silas Marner había vivido en aquella soledad. Las guineas habían ido aumentando en la olla de hierro, y su existencia se había limitado y endurecido de más en más, hasta no ser más que una simple pulsación del deseo y de la satisfacción, pulsación que no tenía ninguna atenencia con ninguna otra criatura humana.

Su vida se había limitado a la acción de tejer y de atesorar, sin tener ningún fin a que tendiera su acción. Este mismo género de transformación lo han sufrido quizá hombres más instruidos, cuando han visto desvanecerse su fe o su amor; sólo que en vez de concretarse a un oficio y a un montón de guineas, han proseguido alguna investigación erudita, algún plan ingenioso, o alguna teoría bien ingeniada.

El rostro y la estatura de Marner se contrajeron y se encorvaron de un modo extraño y constante, para adaptarse mecánicamente a los objetos que lo rodeaban, de modo que producía la misma impresión que una manija o un tubo encorvado, accesorios que no significan nada cuando están separados del objeto de que forman parte. Los ojos prominentes, que antes parecían confiados y soñadores, se hubiese dicho ahora que no le habían sido dado más que para ver una sola especie de cosa muy pequeña, como grano muy menudo, que buscaban por todas partes; en fin, Marner estaba ajado y tan amarillo, que, bien que no tuviera aún cuarenta años, los niños lo llamaban siempre el «viejo Marner».

Sin embargo, aun en esta faz de decrepitud, ocurrió un incidente que demostró que la savia del afecto no se había agotado por completo en su corazón.

Una de sus tareas cotidianas era ir a buscar agua a un pozo que estaba algo apartado de su casa. Con ese objeto, desde su llegada a Raveloe tenía un gran cántaro de barro pardo, que conservaba como el utensilio más precioso que poseyera entre las comodidades muy escasas que se había concedido. Ese cántaro había sido su compañero durante doce años. Siempre había estado parado en el mismo sitio, y siempre le había extendido el asa desde el amanecer, de suerte que la forma de aquel vaso revestía a los ojos de Silas la expresión de una amabilidad solícita. Además, el contacto del asa en la palma de la mano, le proporcionaba un placer inseparable del de tener agua fresca y limpia.

Un día, al volver del pozo, tropezó contra la traviesa de una cerca, y el cántaro de barro, al caer con fuerza sobre las piedras de la bóveda de un foso, se rompió en tres pedazos. Silas los recogió y los llevó a su casa muy apesadumbrado. El cántaro ya no podía servir; sin embargo, armó los pedazos, y, como recuerdo, colocó aquella ruina en su sitio acostumbrado.

Tal era la historia de Silas Marner hasta el decimoquinto año de su estancia en Raveloe. Todo el día se lo pasaba sentado frente al bastidor, con los oídos llenos de su ruido monótono, y los ojos pegados al lento progreso del lienzo uniforme y plomizo. El movimiento de sus músculos se repetía a intervalos tan iguales, que sus pausas parecían ser una molestia casi tan grande como la detención de la respiración.

Pero por la noche venían sus delicias; por la noche cerraba los postigos, trancaba las puertas y sacaba su oro. Desde hacía mucho tiempo el montón se había vuelto demasiado grande para caber en la olla de hierro, y había fabricado, para guardar las monedas, dos gruesas bolsas de cuero, que no perdían sitio en su lugar de reposo, porque lo dúctil de la envoltura las hacía adaptarse a todos los rincones.

¡Qué brillantes eran las guineas cuando corrían la abertura negra del cuero! La plata no entraba más que en pequeña proporción, en el total de la suma, comparada con el oro, porque las grandes piezas de tela que formaban el trabajo principal de Silas, eran siempre pagadas en parte con oro, y la plata la dedicaba a sus necesidades materiales, escogiendo siempre los chelines, y los medios chelines para los gastos de esta naturaleza.

Las guineas eran las que más le gustaban; pero no quería cambiar las monedas grandes de plata; las coronas y las medias coronas que había ganado él mismo, y que eran el fruto de su labor, también le agradaban.

Hacía montones con las monedas y hundía en ellos las manos; después las contaba y formaba pilas regulares; apretaba la redondez de su contorno entre el pulgar y los otros dedos, y pensaba con cariño en las guineas que todavía estaban ganadas a medias con el tejido, como si fueran criaturas que estuvieran por nacer; pensaba en las guineas que vendrían lentamente en los años futuros, que vendrían durante su existencia, cuyo curso se extendía muy lejos frente a él y cuyo fin estaba completamente velado por innumerables días de trabajo.

¿Habría de qué sorprenderse de que su pensamiento estuviera siempre absorto por su telar y su tesoro, cuando tenía que recorrer los campos y los caminos para ir a llevar y traer trabajo, y que sus pasos ya no vagaran por las orillas de los cercos, en busca de las plantas familiares? Ellas también pertenecían a aquel pasado a que su vida se había substraído. Así las aguas de un arroyo descienden mucho más abajo de los bordes herbosos que limitan el antiguo ancho de su lecho, para volverse el trémulo hilo de agua que se

traga un surco en la arena estéril.

Pero por el día de Navidad de ese decimoquinto año, otro grande acontecimiento se produjo en la existencia de Marner, y su historia se confundió de un modo singular con la vida de sus vecinos.

III

EL PERSONAJE más importante de Raveloe era el *squire* Cass, que vivía en una gran casa roja que tenía un bonito atrio al frente y altas caballerizas al fondo, casi en frente de la iglesia.

Había otros terratenientes en la parroquia, pero él era el único honrado con el título de *squire*; porque bien que la familia del señor Osgood fuera considerada también como de origen inmemorial —no habiéndose atrevido nunca los habitantes de Raveloe a remontarse hasta el vacío espantoso en que los Osgood no existían—, sin embargo, no hacía más que poseer la granja que ocupaba, mientras que el *squire* Cass tenía uno o dos arrendatarios que se quejaban a él de los perjuicios que les causaban las liebres como si hubiese sido un señor.

Se estaba todavía en ese período glorioso de la guerra, considerada como un favor especial acordado por la Providencia a los propietarios territoriales. Entonces, los precios de los frutos no habían bajado tanto como para precipitar a la raza de los pequeños *squires* y de los arrendatarios en el camino de la ruina, hacia el cual sus hábitos de prodigalidad y la mala explotación de sus tierras los arrastraban rápidamente.

Al decir esto aludo a la aldea de Raveloe y a las parroquias que se le parecían, porque la vida de nuestros antiguos campesinos presentaba aspectos diferentes. Así ocurre con toda existencia que se ha esparcido sobre una superficie variada, en la que soplan en direcciones diversas una multitud de corrientes —desde los vientos del cielo hasta los pensamientos de los hombres— que se mueven y se cruzan eternamente, produciendo resultados incalculables.

Raveloe estaba situado en una hondonada, en medio de los árboles espesos y de caminos surcados por huellas, lejos de las corrientes de la actividad industrial y del fervor puritano; los ricos comían y bebían a sus anchas, aceptando la gota y la apoplejía como cosas que se trasmitían misteriosamente en las familias honorables, y los pobres pensaban que los ricos estaban en su pleno derecho de llevar alegre vida.

Por otra parte, los festines de éstos daban por resultado multiplicar las sobras, que eran la herencia de los primeros. Betti Jay sentía el olor de la cocción de los jamones del *squire*, pero el fuerte deseo que sentía de comerlos era calmado por el jugo untuoso en que se los hacía hervir; y cuando las estaciones traían la época de las grandes reuniones alegres, todo el mundo las consideraba como un excelente regalo para los pobres.

En efecto, las fiestas de Raveloe estaban en relación con las postas de buey y los barriles de cerveza: se hacían con prodigalidad y duraban mucho tiempo, principalmente en invierno.

Las damas que, habiendo empaquetado sus mejores vestidos y tocados en cartones, se arriesgaban a vadear los arroyos en tiempos de lluvia y nieve, sentadas a la turca sobre cojines y llevando su preciosa carga —cuando no se sabía hasta dónde llegaría el agua—, no es de suponer que contaran con que les esperaba un placer efímero.

Es por esta razón qué se tomaban disposiciones para que en la mala estación —época en que había poco trabajo y las horas parecían largas— varios vecinos tuvieran sucesivamente mesa abierta. Así que los platos del *squire* Cass no eran tan frescos ni tan abundantes, sus convidados no podían hacer mejor cosa que trasladarse a la casa del señor Osgood, en los Huertos. Allí encontraban lomos y jamones intactos, pasteles de cerdo que acababan de salir del horno y manteca fresca recién hilada; en fin, todo lo que el apetito de gentes ociosas podía desear, y de mejor calidad, quizá, que en casa del *squire* Cass, aunque la abundancia no fuera mayor.



Porque la mujer del *squire* había muerto hacía tiempo, y la Casa Roja se veía privada de la esposa y de la madre, cuya presencia es la fuente saludable del amor y del temor que deben reinar en la familia y entre los servidores.

Esto contribuía no sólo a explicar por qué, en los días de fiesta, la profusión de provisiones superaba a la calidad, sino también por qué el orgulloso *squire* condescendía con tanta frecuencia a presidir en el gabinete particular de la taberna del *Arco Iris*, antes que a la sombra de los negros artesonados de su salón; así como quizá que sus hijos se condujeran bastante mal.

Raveloe no era un sitio en que la censura de las costumbres fuera severa; sin embargo, se miraba como una debilidad del *squire* que hubiera conservado a todos sus hijos ociosos en la casa; y, bien que debe concederse cierta licencia a los hijos de los padres que tienen medios, las gentes meneaban la cabeza al ver la vida que llevaba el menor, Dunstan, generalmente llamado Dunsey Cass, cuyas aficiones por la copa y las apuestas podían volverse algo más serio que un pasatiempo juvenil.

Poco importaba, ciertamente, decían los vecinos, lo que le sucediera a Dunsey —un individuo pendenciero y burlón, que parecía complacerse tanto más en beber cuanto más sufrían los otros de sed—, con tal, sin embargo, que sus hechos no le acarreasen algún disgusto a una familia como la del *squire* Cass, que tenía un monumento en la iglesia, y copas de plata más antiguas que el rey Jorge III.

En cambio sería una gran lástima que el señor Godfrey, el mayor, guapo mozo de fisonomía franca y de buen carácter, que un día heredaría las propiedades, se pusiera a seguir el mismo camino que el hermano, como había parecido hacía poco. Si seguía de aquel modo, la señorita Nancy Lammeter acabaría por romper con él; porque se sabía muy bien que ella le trataba con mucha reserva desde la pascua de Pentecostés del año precedente, época en que había hablado mucho, porque Godfrey había pasado varios días sin volver a su casa.

Pasaba algo que no estaba bien, algo que no era común, era evidente, porque el señor Godfrey estaba lejos de tener el color fresco y la fisonomía abierta de antes.

En cierto momento todo el mundo decía: «¡Qué hermosa pareja harían él y la señorita Nancy!», y si ella llegara a ser la señora de la Casa Roja, iba a haber un buen cambio, porque los Lammeter estaban criados de modo que no podían soportar que se malgastara una pizca de sal. Sin embargo, todas las gentes de su casa obtenían lo que había de mejor, cada cual según su rango. Con una nuera así, el viejo *squire* realizaría economías, aun cuando no aportara un penique de dote; porque era de temer que, a pesar de sus rentas, el *squire* Cass tuviera más agujeros en el bolsillo que aquél por donde metía la mano. Pero si el señor Godfrey no cambiaba de conducta, podía decirle «adiós» a la señorita Nancy Lammeter.

Era ese Godfrey, que antes daba tantas esperanzas, el que estaba con las manos en los bolsillos de su saco y la espalda vuelta al juego, en el salón de obscuro artesonado, un día de noviembre de este decimoquinto año de la residencia de Silas Marner en Raveloe. La luz gris y mortecina iluminaba débilmente las paredes adornadas de fusiles, de látigos y de colas de zorro; los abrigos y los sombreros arrojados sobre las sillas; los jarros de plata que exhalaban un olor de cerveza aventada; el fuego medio apagado, y las pipas colocadas en los ángulos de las chimeneas; signos de una vida doméstica desprovista de todo encanto superior, con que la expresión de sombrío fastidio del rostro rubio de Godfrey estaba en triste armonía. Parecía escuchar como si esperara a alguien. Muy luego el ruido de pasos pesados, acompañados de silbidos, se hizo oír a través del gran vacío de la entrada del vestíbulo.

La puerta se abrió y entró un joven fornido y vulgar; tenía la cara encendida y el aire gratuitamente vencedor que caracteriza la primera faz de la embriaguez. Era Dunsey. Al verlo, el rostro de Godfrey perdió parte de su aspecto sombrío para tomar la expresión más activa del odio.

El hermoso galgo negro que estaba acostado frente a la chimenea se retiró a un rincón, bajo una silla.

—¿Qué tal, maese Godfrey, qué me queréis? —dijo Dunsey en tono burlón—. Sois mi hermano mayor y mi superior; tenía, pues, que venir, puesto que me habéis hecho llamar.

—Pues bien; voy a deciros lo que quiero, pero antes sacudíos la borrachera, y escuchad, si os place —dijo Godfrey con acento furioso; él mismo había bebido más de la cuenta, a fin de convertir su tristeza en cólera ciega—. Quiero deciros que es preciso que le entregue al *squire* ese arriendo de Fowler, o que le advierta que os lo he dado; porque amenaza con el embargo, y todo se descubrirá, que yo lo informe o no. Acaba de declarar que le iba a encargar a Cox que procediera si Fowler no venía a pagar lo atrasado esta semana. El *squire* está sin dinero y está de un humor como para no soportar tonterías. Ya sabéis con qué os ha amenazado si os sorprendía otra vez despilfarrando su dinero. De modo que tratad de buscar esa suma, y lo más pronto posible, ¿habéis oído?

—¡Oh! —dijo Dunsey, riendo sardónicamente, mientras se acercaba a su hermano mirándole a la cara—,

supongamos que vos mismo os proporcionarais el dinero, para evitarme esa molestia, ¿qué os parece? Puesto que fuisteis lo bastante bueno para entregármelo, no me neguéis la amabilidad de devolverlo en mi lugar; ya sabéis que fue por amor fraternal que procedisteis así.

Godfrey se mordió los labios y apretó los puños.

—No os acerquéis mirándome de ese modo, porque os aplasto.

—¡Oh!, no, seríais incapaz de hacer eso —dijo Dunsey, girando sin embargo sobre los talones para alejarse—; bien sabéis que soy muy buen hermano. Podría haceros arrojar de casa y de la familia, y haceros desheredar cuando quisiera. Sí, yo le contaré al *squire* cómo se casó su hijo mayor con la linda Molly Tarren, y cuán desgraciada ha sido, pero que no ha podido vivir con esa esposa borracha; me deslizaría en vuestro lugar lo más cómodamente posible. Pero ya lo veis, me callo; soy tan conciliador y tan bueno. Estoy seguro de que lo haréis todo por mí. Estoy seguro de que os proporcionaréis por mí esas cien libras esterlinas.

—¿Cómo puedo proporcionarme ese dinero? —dijo Godfrey, trémulo de rabia—. No tengo oficio ni beneficio. Y vos mentís al decir que os deslizaríais en mi lugar; os haríais echar vos también, nada más. Porque si vos os ponéis a llevar chismes, yo haré otro tanto. Bob es el hijo favorito, lo sabéis perfectamente. Mi padre se daría por muy satisfecho con no volveros a ver.

—Poco importa —dijo Dunsey inclinando la cabeza hacia un costado, mientras que miraba por la ventana—. Me sería muy agradable partir en vuestra compañía; sois un hermano tan guapo, y siempre nos ha agradado tanto disputarnos; no sabría qué hacer sin vos. Pero preferís que los dos nos quedemos en casa, ya lo sé. De manera que os arreglaréis de modo de conseguir esa pequeña suma de dinero, y voy a deciros hasta la vista, bien que deplore dejaros.

Dunstan se marchaba, pero Godfrey se precipitó tras él y lo tomó del brazo, diciendo con un juramento:

—Os digo que no tengo dinero… que no puedo procurarme dinero.

—Pedidle prestado al viejo Kimble.

—Os digo que no quiere prestarme más y que no lo pediré.

—Bueno, entonces vended a *Relámpago*.

—Sí, eso es fácil decirlo. Necesito el dinero inmediatamente.

—Pues bien, no tenéis más que montarlo en la cacería de mañana. Bryce y Keating estarán seguramente. Os harán más de una oferta.

—Eso es, y volveré a casa a las ocho de la noche, salpicado de barro hasta las narices. Voy al baile que da la señora de Osgood celebrando su día.

—¡Ah!, ¡ah! —dijo Dunsey, volviendo la cabeza de lado y tratando de hablar con una vocecita aflautada —. Y la linda señorita Nancy estará allí, y bailaremos con ella, y le prometeremos no ser malo, y volveremos a entrar en favor y…

—Tened la lengua al hablar de la señorita Nancy, pedazo de tonto —dijo Godfrey rojo de cólera—, u os estrangulo.

—¿Para qué? —dijo Dunsey, siempre con tono afectado, pero tomando un látigo de sobre la mesa y golpeándose con el cabo en la palma de la mano—. Se os presenta una buena ocasión. Os aconsejo que entréis en sus gracias; eso ahorraría tiempo, si Molly llegara a beber una gota de láudano de más, y os dejara viudo. Poco le importaría a la señorita Nancy ser la segunda, si lo ignorara. Y vos tenéis un excelente hermano que guardará bien vuestro secreto, y vos seréis muy amable con él.

—Voy a deciros lo que pasa —dijo Godfrey trémulo y vuelto a ponerse pálido—. Mi paciencia está casi agotada. Si fuerais algo más vivo, sabríais que es posible llevar a un hombre demasiado lejos y hacerle tan fácil franquear este o aquel obstáculo. No estoy seguro de no encontrarme ya en este punto; yo puedo también revelarle todo al *squire*. Por lo menos, no me seguiréis molestando, si no consigo otra cosa. Y, al fin y al cabo, tendrá que saber la verdad. Ella me ha amenazado con venir a decírselo todo en persona. Por consiguiente, no os jactéis de que vuestro silencio valga el precio que se os ocurra asignarle. Me arrancáis mi dinero de tal modo que no me queda ninguno para apaciguar a esa mujer y un día cumplirá sus amenazas. Le diré todo a mi padre. En cuanto a vos, idos al diablo.

Dunsey se dio cuenta de que había ido más allá de lo que debía, y que había llegado a un extremo en que el propio Godfrey, el hombre irresoluto, era capaz de tomar una resolución. Sin embargo, dijo con indiferencia:

—Como queráis; pero ante todo, voy a beber un trago de cerveza.

Y después de haber llamado, se recostó en dos sillas y se puso a golpear la repisa de la ventana con el mango del látigo.

Godfrey había permanecido de pie, con la espalda vuelta al fuego, agitando los dedos con inquietud en

medio del contenido de los bolsillos de su saco, y con la mirada fija en el suelo. Su alto cuerpo musculoso estaba lleno de coraje físico; sin embargo, no le sugería ninguna decisión cuando los peligros que había que afrontar no consistían en acogotar a alguien. Su irresolución natural y su cobardía moral eran exageradas por una situación cuyas consecuencias temibles parecían hacer presión de todos lados con la misma fuerza.

Su irritación lo hubiera llevado en seguida a desafiar a Dunstan, y a anticiparse a todas las denuncias, si las miserias que le acarrearía el proceder así no le hubieran parecido más insoportables que el mal actual. Los resultados de una confesión no eran dudosos, eran seguros, mientras que la denuncia permanecía incierta.

De aquella incertidumbre, considerada de cerca, cayó en la duda y en la irresolución con un sentimiento de reposo. El hijo desheredado de un pequeño *squire*, igualmente poco dispuesto a trabajar la tierra y a mendigar, se sentía casi tan impotente como un árbol desarraigado que, favorecido por el suelo y la atmósfera, se habría desarrollado considerablemente en el propio sitio en que antes sólo era un retoño. Quizá hubiera llegado a considerar con cierta alegría el tener que labrar la tierra, si le fuera dable obtener a Nancy Lammeter a ese precio. Pero, puesto que tenía que perderla sin remedio, hiciera lo que hiciera, y la herencia también, puesto que tenía que romper todo vínculo, menos el que lo desagradaba y le quitaba todo motivo para reformarse, no podía imaginar que le quedara, después de la confesión de su falta, otro porvenir más que enrolarse como voluntario. Ésa era la determinación más desesperada, después del suicidio, ante los ojos de las familias honorables.

¡No! Más valía para él fiarse al azar que a su propia resolución; más valía seguir sentado al festín, bebiendo el vino que le agradaba, aun con la espada suspendida sobre la cabeza y el terror en el corazón, antes que precipitarse en las tinieblas en que todo placer quedaría perdido para siempre. La última concesión que pudo hacerle a Dunstan a propósito del caballo, comenzó a parecerle fácil al lado del cumplimiento de la amenaza de su hermano. Sin embargo, su orgullo no le consintió que reanudara la conversación sin continuar la disputa.

Dunstan lo esperaba y bebía la cerveza a sorbos más pequeños que de costumbre.

—Es muy propio de vos —exclamó Godfrey con acento amargo— el hablar con tanta indiferencia de la venta de *Relámpago*, la última cosa que me sea lícito llamar mía, y el más lindo animal que he tenido en mi vida. Si tuvieseis un asomo de orgullo, os daría vergüenza ver vacías nuestras caballerizas y que todo el mundo se burle de ello. Pero tengo la convicción de que venderíais vuestra propia persona aunque sólo fuera por tener el placer de hacerle sentir a alguien que ha hecho un mal negocio.

—Sí —dijo Dunstan con mucha calma—, me estáis haciendo justicia, a lo que veo. Vos sabéis que soy una perla cuando se trata de engatusar a las gentes para realizar un negocio. Es por esta razón que os aconsejo que me dejéis a mí el encargo de vender a *Relámpago*. Lo montaré mañana en la cacería, reemplazándoos, con mucho gusto. No tendré tanta apostura como vos en la silla, pero se admirará más al caballo que al jinete.

—Sí, eso es… ¡Confiaros mi caballo!

—Como gustéis —dijo Dunstan poniéndose a golpear otra vez el antepecho de la ventana, con aire del todo indiferente—. Sois vos mismo quien debe devolver el dinero a Fowler; eso no es cuenta mía. Vos recibisteis ese dinero cuando fuisteis a Bramcote, y fuisteis vos mismo quien le dijo al *squire* que no os habían pagado esa suma. Yo no tengo nada que ver con eso; vos tuvisteis la bondad de darme ese dinero, dejad eso quieto, a mí me es indiferente. Yo sólo trataba de serviros vendiendo el caballo, sabía que mañana no es cómodo ir tan lejos.

Godfrey permaneció en silencio durante un rato. Quería arrojarse sobre Dunstan, arrancarle el látigo de la mano, darle de azotes hasta ponerlo a dos dedos de la muerte, y ningún temor corporal lo hubiera detenido, si otra suerte de miedo, alimentado por sentimientos que podían más que su ira, no hubieran dominado su voluntad. Cuando volvió a hablar fue en tono casi conciliador.

—Bueno, no tenéis en la cabeza ninguna locura respecto del caballo, ¿eh? ¿Lo venderéis bien lealmente y me entregaréis el precio? De otro modo, ya lo sabéis, todo se lo llevará el diablo, porque no tengo otra tabla de salvación. Os agradará menos el desplomarme la casa encima, sabiendo que también os apretará a vos.

—Sí, sí, muy bien —dijo Dunstan, poniéndose de pie—. Estaba cierto de que acabaríais por mostraros razonable. Yo soy hombre capaz de hacerle tragar el anzuelo al viejo Bryce. Voy a conseguiros ciento veinte libras esterlinas por vuestro caballo, tan fácilmente como conseguiría un penique.

—Pero quizás lluevan chispas como llovió ayer; en tal caso no podréis ir a la cacería —dijo Godfrey, sin darse cuenta de si deseaba o no que surgiera ese impedimento.

—¡Llover! —exclamó Dunstan—, nada de eso, siempre he tenido suerte con el tiempo. Llovería, sin

duda, si pensarais ir vos. Jamás tenéis triunfos en vuestros juegos, bien lo sabéis, porque yo los tengo todos. Vos ponéis la belleza y yo la muerte, de manera que tenéis que guardarme a vuestro lado como «porte-bonheur». ¡Bah!, jamás haréis nada bueno sin mí.

—¡Que el diablo os confunda! Tened la lengua —dijo Godfrey impetuosamente—. No vayáis a emborracharos mañana; de otro modo podríais salir por las orejas al volver a casa y estropear a *Relámpago*.

—Tranquilizad vuestro corazón sensible —dijo Dunstan—. Jamás me habéis sorprendido bebiendo doble cuando tengo que hacer un trato; eso me echaría a perder la diversión. Por otra parte, cada vez que caigo, estoy seguro de caer parado.

Dicho esto, Dunstan salió haciendo golpear la puerta.

Dejó a Godfrey entregado a hacer amargas reflexiones sobre su situación personal, que se sucedían entonces de un día para el otro, cuando no estaba excitado por el sport, la bebida, los naipes, o por el placer más raro, pero menos susceptible de ser olvidado, de ver a la señorita Nancy Lammeter.

Los sufrimientos sutiles y variados, que nacen de la sensibilidad más delicada que acompaña a una cultura elevada, son quizás menos dignos de lástima que esa hosca privación de alegrías y de consuelos intelectuales, que obliga a los espíritus más groseros a permanecer constantemente frente a frente con su pesar y su descontento.

La vida de aquellos rústicos antepasados, que nos sentimos inclinados a considerar personajes prosaicos —de esos hombres cuya sola ocupación era cabalgar alrededor de sus propiedades, que se iban volviendo cada vez más pesados sobre sus monturas y pasaban el resto de sus días satisfaciendo de un modo despreocupado sus sentidos embotados por la monotonía—, su vida, digo, tenía, sin embargo, algo de patética.

Las calamidades los herían a ellos también y sus primeros errores les acarreaban duras consecuencias. Quizás un amor por una dulce joven, imagen de pureza, de orden y de tranquilidad, había abierto sus miradas ante la visión de una existencia en que los días no hubieran parecido demasiado largos, aun sin los excesos de la intemperancia. Pero la doncella había desaparecido y la visión se había disipado. Entonces, ¿qué les restaba, sobre todo si se habían vuelto demasiado pesados para la caza, a caballo, o para cargar un fusil a través de los surcos? Nada, si no es beber y alegrarse, o beber e irritarse, con tal de que no fueran esclavos de la vanidad, y pudieran repetir largamente, con caluroso énfasis, las cosas que ya habían contado muchas veces durante el año.

Seguramente que entre esos hombres, de tez rubicunda y mirada hosca había algunos que, gracias a su bondad natural, no se sentían siempre impulsados a la brutalidad, aún en medio de sus extravíos. Ésos, en la época en que sus mejillas estaban frescas, habían sentido la punta acerada del pesar y del remordimiento. Habían sido heridos por las cañas en que se apoyaban, o bien, sin reflexionar, habían metido sus miembros en cepos de los que nadie podía libertarles.

En esas tristes circunstancias, comunes a todos nosotros, era imposible que el pensamiento de esos hombres no encontrara algún sitio de reposo, fuera del círculo continuamente trillado de su historia insignificante.



Tal era, por lo menos, la condición de Godfrey Cass, al cumplir los veintiséis años. Un movimiento de remordimientos, secundado por esas pequeñas influencias indefinibles que todas las relaciones personales ejercen sobre una naturaleza flexible, lo había impulsado a contraer un matrimonio secreto, que era un estigma en su existencia. Era una fea historia de pasión vulgar, de ilusión y de desilusión, que no hay para qué sacar de la celda secreta de los recuerdos amargos de Godfrey.

Este sabía desde hacía tiempo que le había sido debida en parte a un lazo que le tendió Dunstan, quien había visto en aquel casamiento degradante de su hermano el medio de satisfacer a su vez su odio celoso y su codicia. Y si Godfrey hubiera podido considerarse simplemente como una víctima, la irritación que le causaba el freno de hierro que el destino le había puesto en la boca, le hubiera sido menos insoportable.

Si las maldiciones que pronunciaba a media voz, cuando estaba solo, no hubiesen tenido otro objeto que la treta diabólica de Dunstan, le hubiera sido posible tener menos espanto a las consecuencias de su confesión. Pero le restaba otra cosa que maldecir: su locura y sus vicios personales, que ahora le parecían insensatos y tan inexplicables como lo son casi todas nuestras locuras y nuestros vicios, cuando la causa que los ha provocado ha desaparecido desde hace largo tiempo.

Durante cuatro años había pensado en Nancy Lammeter, y la había buscado, con un culto secreto y paciente, como a una mujer que lo hacía soñar alegremente en el porvenir. Ella sería su esposa, y que su hogar fuera encantador, más encantador que el del *squire* en sus mejores días, y le sería fácil, cuando ella estuviera siempre junto a él, hacer a un lado aquellas estúpidas costumbres que no eran placeres, sino sólo una manera febricitante de engañar la ociosidad.

Godfrey, cuyos gustos eran esencialmente domésticos, había sido criado en una casa cuyo hogar no tenía sonrisas, y en la que los hábitos cotidianos no eran rígidos por la presencia del orden interior. Su carácter fácil le había hecho adoptar sin resistencia el género de vida de su familia, pero el deseo de algún afecto tierno y duradero, el deseo ardiente de soportar alguna influencia que le facilitara la procura del bienestar que prefería, hacían ante sus ojos que la limpieza, la pureza, el buen orden y la liberalidad de la casa Lammeter —iluminada por la sonrisa de Nancy— fuesen iguales a esas horas frescas y brillantes de la mañana, en que las tentaciones dormitan, y sólo se oye la voz del ángel bueno que invita al trabajo, a la sobriedad y a la paz.

Y, sin embargo, la esperanza de ese paraíso no había bastado para salvarlo de los extravíos que lo excluían siempre. En vez de apretar con mano firme el sólido cordón de seda, por medio del cual Nancy lo hubiera llevado sano y salvo a las rientes riberas en que la marcha es fácil y segura, se había dejado llevar hacia atrás en medio del fango y del lodo, y allí, era inútil debatirse. Se había creado vínculos que le vedaban todo móvil saludable de reacción y que lo exasperaban sin cesar.

Sin embargo, había una situación peor aún; la que le esperaba cuando el vil secreto se descubriera; así es que el deseo que siempre triunfaba en él de todos los demás, era alejar al desgraciado día en que tendría que soportar las consecuencias del resentimiento violento de su padre por la herida causada al orgullo de su familia, en la que tendría que renunciar quizás a aquel bienestar y a aquella dignidad hereditaria que, al fin y al cabo, era una razón para vivir, llevando consigo la incertidumbre de que estaba proscrito para siempre de la vista y de la estima de Nancy Lammeter.

Cuanto más se prolongara el plazo, —mayor era la probabilidad de verse libre, por lo menos, de algunas de las consecuencias odiosas a que había librado su ser—, más ocasiones le quedaban de gozar el extraño placer de ver a Nancy y de recoger las débiles muestras de un resto de afecto por él. Era impulsado hacia ese placer por accesos, y frecuentemente, después de haber pasado semanas enteras evitando a la joven; cuando la veía a lo lejos como un ángel de alas brillantes —premio radioso cuya vista lo excitaba a precipitarse hacia adelante—, sentía más que nunca el peso de sus crueles cadenas.

Uno de esos accesos lo poseía en aquel momento, y el ardor de su pasión hubiera bastado para que confiara *Relámpago* a Dunstan antes que defraudar aquel deseo, si otra razón más no hubiera para que tomara parte en la cacería del día siguiente. Esa razón dependía de la circunstancia de que la cita debía tener lugar cerca de Batterley, aldea en que vivía su desgraciada esposa, cuya imagen se le hacía cada vez más odiosa. Para la imaginación de Godfrey aquella mujer vagaba por todos los alrededores. El yugo que un hombre se crea con sus malas acciones, engendra el odio en las mayores naturalezas, y el alegre y afectuoso Godfrey Cass se agriaba rápidamente. Crueles tentaciones lo asediaban, pareciendo entrar y salir en su corazón como demonios que habían encontrado en él alojamiento preparado.

¿Qué iba a hacer aquella tarde para pasar el tiempo? Al fin y al cabo, ¿por qué no iría a la taberna del *Arco Iris* para ver qué se decía de la riña de gallos? Todo el mundo iba allí, y, ¿en qué otra cosa podía pasar el rato, bien que a él no le preocuparía nada aquella diversión?

La pequeña galga negra, que se había parado frente a él y lo había mirado fijamente durante un buen rato, se impacientó y saltó a las rodillas de su amo para recibir la caricia acostumbrada. Pero Godfrey la rechazó sin mirarla y salió de la pieza. La perra lo siguió humildemente y sin rencor, quizá porque no tenía otra cosa en perspectiva.

IV

DUNSTAN CASS, al ponerse en marcha una mañana fría y húmeda, al paso tranquilo y mesurado de un cazador que tiene que ir a caballo al punto de reunión de una cacería, tenía que seguir el camino que, en su parte terminal, pasaba por el terreno sin cercar llamado la Cantera, en que se encontraba la casita —antes la cabaña de un picapedrero— que Silas Marner habitaba hacía quince años.

El sitio parecía muy triste en aquella estación, con la greda mojada y barrosa que lo rodeaba y con el agua turbia y rojiza que había alcanzado un alto nivel en la cantera abandonada. Tal fue la primera impresión de Dunstan al acercarse a aquel sitio. Recordó después que el viejo tonto del tejedor, el ruido de cuyo telar ya oía, tenía mucho dinero oculto en alguna parte. ¿Cómo era posible que a él, Dunstan Cass, que había oído hablar muchas veces de la avaricia de Marner, no se le hubiese ocurrido sugerirle a Godfrey que consiguiera del vejete, ya fuera asustándole, ya fuera captándoselo hábilmente, que le prestara su dinero con la excelente garantía de las esperanzas del *squire*? Este recurso se le presentaba ahora como muy fácil y agradable de realizar. Pensaba que, según todas las probabilidades, el tesoro de Marner debía ser bastante grande como para dejarle a Godfrey, después que éste hubiera atendido a las necesidades más urgentes, un buen excedente que lo pondría en condiciones de servir a su abnegado hermano. Así es que tuvo tentaciones de volver bridas hacia la casa. Godfrey estaría bastante bien dispuesto para aceptar la idea. Adoptaría ávidamente un plan que quizá le evitaría separarse de *Relámpago*. Pero cuando la reflexión de Dunstan llegó a este punto, el deseo de proseguir la marcha se fortificó y prevaleció. No quería proporcionarle aquella satisfacción a Godfrey; prefería que maese Godfrey estuviera mortificado.

Además, a Dunstan lo regocijaba la idea tan importante ante sus ojos de tener que vender su caballo, y además la ocasión de cerrar un trato, de hacer el fanfarrón y probablemente de engañar a alguien. Podía gozar por entero de todo el placer que resultaría de la venta del caballo de su hermano, sin privarse del gran placer de conseguir que Godfrey le tomara dinero prestado a Marner. Siguió, pues, cabalgando hacia el lugar de la cita.

Bryce y Keating estaban allí, como Dunstan estaba seguro de ello; ¡tenía tanta suerte!

—Hola —dijo Bryce, que desde hacía tiempo codiciaba a *Relámpago*—, venís montando el caballo de vuestro hermano; ¿por qué ha sido eso?

—Nada, le he hecho un cambio —dijo Dunstan, cuyo placer en mentir, casi independiente de la idea de utilidad, no iba a disminuir en mucho la probabilidad de que su interlocutor lo creyera—. *Relámpago* es ahora mío.

—¡Cómo! ¿Os lo ha cambiado contra vuestro viejo rocín de huesos grandes? —dijo Bryce con la entera certidumbre de que obtendría en respuesta otra mentira.

—No, teníamos que arreglar una pequeña cuenta —respondió Dunstan con indiferencia—, y *Relámpago* ha saldado la diferencia. Le he hecho un servicio a Godfrey tomándole el caballo. Lo hice contra mi gusto, porque tenía un capricho por una yegua de Jortin, animal de la sangre más rara que jamás hayáis montado. Pero ahora conservaré a *Relámpago*, aunque el otro día me ofreció por él ciento cincuenta libras un hombre allá, en Flitt; ese que compra para lord Cromleck, ese individuo que bizquea y usa un chaleco verde. Pero no pienso deshacerme de *Relámpago*; no encontraré fácilmente mejor animal para saltar cercos. La yegua de Jortin tiene más sangre, pero tiene las patas un poco menos fuertes.



Bryce, naturalmente, adivinó que Dunstan quería vender el caballo, y Dunstan se dio cuenta de que él lo adivinaba; el chalaneo sólo es una de las numerosas transacciones humanas conducidas de esta manera ingeniosa. Ambos consideraban que el trato estaba en su primera faz, cuando Bryce respondió con ironía:

—Pues estoy sorprendido, y me sorprende que penséis conservar el caballo, porque nunca he oído que un hombre se niegue a vender un animal cuando le ofrecen la mitad más de lo que vale. Tendréis suerte si conseguís por él cien libras.

Entonces, habiéndose adelantado Keating, el trato se complicó. Quedó por último concertado, comprándolo Bryce por ciento veinte libras, pagaderas a la entrega de *Relámpago*, sano y salvo, en las caballerizas públicas de Batterley.

A Dunsey se le ocurrió que sería prudente que renunciase a la cacería, se dirigiera inmediatamente a Batterley, y, después de esperar el regreso de Bryce, alquilar un caballo que lo llevara a su casa con el dinero en el bolsillo.

Sin embargo, el deseo de hacer una partida de caza, estimulado por su confianza y su buena estrella, así como por un trago de aguardiente tomado a su frasco de bolsillo cuando cerraron el trato, no era fácil de vencer, considerando, sobre todo, que montaba un animal que excitaría la admiración de los cazadores al verle saltar los cercos.

Pero Dunstan saltó uno de más y empaló su caballo en un poste. Su persona inelegante y completamente invendible escapó ilesa, mientras que el pobre *Relámpago*, inconsciente de su calor, rodó de costado y exhaló dolorosamente el último suspiro.

Había sucedido que, pocos minutos antes, Dunstan se había visto obligado a apearse para arreglar uno de los estribos. Lanzó muchas imprecaciones contra aquel retardo que lo relegaba a la cola de la cacería en el momento del triunfo. Enceguecido por la desesperación, saltó temerariamente los cercos, y estaba a punto de reunirse a la traílla cuando ocurrió el accidente fatal. De modo, pues, que se encontraba entre los cazadores ardientes que iban adelante, que se preocupaban poco de lo que sucedía detrás de ellos y los retrasados, que lo mismo podían pasar muy lejos y muy cerca del sitio en que había caído *Relámpago*.

Dunstan, que se preocupaba siempre más de las contrariedades del momento presente que de sus consecuencias lejanas, no bien se vio de pie y reconoció que *Relámpago* estaba perdido, sintió cierto placer al pensar que no había sido visto en una situación que ninguna fanfarronada hubiera podido hacer envidiable.

Después de haberse reconfortado de la sacudida con un poco de aguardiente y muchos juramentos, se dirigió lo más pronto posible a un zarzal que estaba a su derecha. Se le ocurrió que atravesando por allí encontraría medio de dirigirse a Batterley sin correr el riesgo de encontrar a ninguno de los cazadores. Su primera intención era alquilar allí un caballo que lo llevaría inmediatamente a su casa; porque lo que era hacer cierto número de millas a pie, sin un fusil en la mano, y a lo largo de un camino público, no había que esperarlo de su parte como de la de ningún otro joven fogoso de su especie. Le era casi indiferente llevar la noticia a Godfrey, puesto que al mismo tiempo le iba a ofrecer el recurso de dinero de Marner, si Godfrey chillaba, como sucedía siempre que se le hablaba de contraer una nueva deuda, de lo que él sólo sacaba la menor parte; pues bien, no rezongaría mucho rato. Dunstan estaba seguro de que mortificando a Godfrey siempre le haría hacer lo que quisiese. La idea del dinero se volvía cada vez más distinta en su espíritu, ahora que la necesidad se había vuelto urgente. Pero la perspectiva de tener que presentarse en Batterley con las botas embarradas y de afrontar las preguntas burlonas de los mozos de cuadra, contrariaba mucho su deseo impaciente de estar de regreso en Raveloe y poner en ejecución su feliz proyecto.

Al mismo tiempo, un registro que hizo en el bolsillo de su chaleco, mientras iba reflexionando, le recordó que las dos o tres monedas pequeñas que encontró en su índice, eran de un color demasiado pálido para pagar una pequeña deuda, en defecto de cuyo pago, el caballerizo de Batterley había declarado que no haría más negocios con Dunsey Cass. Al fin y al cabo, considerando la dirección en que lo había llevado la cacería, no estaba mucho más lejos de su casa que de Batterley. Sin embargo, Dunsey no brillaba por su lucidez de espíritu. No llegó a esa conclusión sino al darse cuenta de que estaba obligado por otras razones a tomar la resolución sin precedente de volver a la casa a pie.

En ese momento eran cerca de las cuatro y empezaba a formarse la niebla; cuanto antes saliera del camino sería tanto mejor. Recordó que lo había atravesado y que había visto el poste indicador momentos antes que *Relámpago* se abatiera. Entonces, después de abotonar su abrigo y atar sólidamente la zotera de su látigo de caza al mango, golpeó las vueltas de sus botas con el aire de un hombre dueño de sí mismo, como para persuadirse de que estaba preparado para lo que iba a sucederle. Partió en seguida, con la idea de que emprendía una notable proeza de actividad física, que algún día no dejaría de embellecer de un modo o de

otro, en medio de la admiración de una sociedad selecta, en la taberna del *Arco Iris*.

Cuando un joven señor como Dunsey se veía reducido a un medio de locomoción tan excepcional como el de andar a pie, el látigo llevado en la mano es el paliativo deseable de un sentimiento demasiado confuso —demasiado parecido a un sueño— que le hace experimentar su situación inusitada; y Dunstan, a medida que avanzaba a través de la niebla creciente, golpeaba siempre algo con su látigo. Era el látigo de Godfrey. Le había gustado tomarlo sin permiso, porque el mango tenía puño de oro. Naturalmente que no era posible notar, cuando Dunsey lo llevaba en la mano, que el nombre de Godfrey Cass estaba grabado en el puño: sólo se veía que aquel látigo era muy hermoso.

Dunsey no dejaba de temer que le ocurriese tropezar con algún conocido ante los ojos del cual haría triste figura, porque la niebla no es un velo bastante espeso cuando las personas se acercan. Pero, cuando al fin se encontró en las calles de Raveloe que le eran bien conocidas, pensó que aquello era parte de su buena suerte habitual. Entretanto, la niebla, ayudada por la obscuridad de la tarde, se había vuelto un velo más espeso de lo que deseaba. Le ocultaba los baches en que sus pies estaban expuestos a tropezar, le ocultaba todo, de modo que tuvo que guiar sus pasos arrastrando el látigo contra las hierbas que crecían al pie de los cercos. Pensaba que pronto llegaría al punto que daba acceso a las canteras. Lo encontraría por medio de un portillo que había en aquella cerca. Pero fue debido a una circunstancia con la que no contaba que se lo hizo descubrir; es decir, ciertos rayos de luz que inmediatamente adivinó que procedían de la choza de Silas Marner.

Durante el camino, aquella choza y el dinero que estaba oculto en ella habían asediado continuamente su espíritu, y había imaginado distintas maneras de halagar y seducir al tejedor, para que éste, seducido por el cebo de los intereses, se separara sin demora del dinero que poseía.

A Dunstan le parecía que no sería malo agregar algunas amenazas a las proposiciones halagadoras, porque sus nociones de aritmética no eran bastante sólidas como para darle una demostración probatoria de los provechos que darían los intereses. En cuanto a la garantía, la consideraba vagamente como un medio de engañar a un hombre, haciéndole creer que va a ser reembolsado. En fin, la operación que había que intentar sobre el espíritu del avaro, era una tarea que Godfrey confiaría a su hermano, más audaz y más vivo que él. Dunstan estaba ya decidido a este respecto, y en el momento en que vio brillar la luz a través de las rendijas de los postigos de Marner, la idea de tener una conversación con el tejedor se le había vuelto tan familiar, que le pareció lo más natural abordarlo en seguida. Podía tener varias ventajas el proceder así: entre otras, quizás el tejedor tuviera un farol de mano, y Dunstan ya estaba cansado de buscar su camino a tientas.

Todavía estaba a cerca de tres cuartos de milla de su casa y el suelo se volvía desagradablemente resbaladizo, porque la niebla se iba convirtiendo en llovizna. Dobló, pues, hacia la casa, pero no sin cierto temor de errar el buen camino, puesto que no sabía exactamente si la luz se veía al frente o en el costado de la choza. Sin embargo, ayudándose con el mango de su látigo para explorar el terreno, llegó al fin sano y salvo a la puerta de la casa. Golpeó con fuerza, sugiriéndole cierto placer la idea del susto que le daría al vejete aquel estrépito inesperado. Ninguna voz ni movimiento se dejó oír como respuesta: todo era silencio en la choza. ¿Se había ido a acostar el tejedor? ¿Para qué habría dejado la luz encendida entonces? ¡Extraño olvido de un avaro!

Dunstan volvió a golpear con más fuerza, y luego, sin esperar que le respondieran, pasó los dedos por el agujero de la puerta con la intención de sacudirla y, al mismo tiempo correr el pestillo por medio del cordel y volverlo a dejar cerrar, no dudando de que la puerta debía estar atrancada.

Con gran sorpresa vio que aquel doble movimiento la hizo abrir, y se encontró frente a un fuego vivo que iluminaba todos los rincones de la choza —el lecho, el telar, las tres sillas y la mesa—, y le permitía ver que Silas no estaba allí.

Nada podía ser más atrayente para Dunstan en aquel momento que el fuego brillante sobre el fogón de ladrillos. Entró inmediatamente y se sentó.

Delante del fuego también había algo que, si la cocción hubiera estado algo más adelantada, no hubiera carecido de interés para un hombre cuyo estómago estaba vacío. Era un pedazo de carne de cerdo suspendido del gancho de la chimenea por medio de un cordel pasado por el anillo de una gran llave de puerta, según un método conocido por los viejos dueños de casa en que no hay asador. Desgraciadamente el asado había sido colocado en la extremidad del gancho, como para impedir que se fuera a quemar durante la ausencia del dueño. «¿De modo que este viejo tonto de ojos saltones se permite cenar carne? —pensó Dunstan—. Siempre se había dicho que vivía de pan duro, para ponerle freno a su apetito. Pero ¿dónde podía estar a aquella hora, con semejante tiempo y para qué había salido dejando su cena a medio cocer y sin trancar la puerta?». La dificultad con que el propio Dunstan acababa de encontrar su camino, le sugirió

la idea de que el tejedor había salido quizás para buscar combustible, o para cualquier otro menester análogo y de corta duración, y que se había resbalado dentro de la cantera. Ésa era una idea que interesaba a Dunstan y que implicaba consecuencias completamente nuevas. Si el tejedor había muerto, ¿quién tenía derecho a su dinero?, ¿quién sabía que alguien había entrado a tomarlo? No se detuvo más tiempo en las sutilezas de las pruebas; la cuestión urgente, ¿dónde está el dinero?, se apoderó de tal modo de su espíritu que le hizo olvidar por completo que la muerte de Marner no era una certidumbre. Un espíritu pesado, cuando llega a una conclusión que lo halaga, no conserva la conciencia de que la idea de qué ha sacado aquella conclusión era puramente problemática. Y el espíritu de Dunstan era tan pesado como lo es generalmente el de un futuro criminal. Sólo conocía tres escondites, en que hubiera oído decir que los campesinos escondían sus tesoros: el techo de paja, la cama y un agujero hecho en el suelo.

La choza de Marner no estaba techada con paja. Lo primero que hizo Dunstan, después de una sucesión de pensamientos acelerados por el aguijón de la codicia, fue dirigirse al lecho, pero a la vez que caminaba sus miradas recorrieron ávidamente el suelo, cuyos ladrillos, iluminados por el fuego, se veían a través de la arena esparcida encima de ellos. Sin embargo, no eran visibles en todas partes. Había un sitio, en efecto, uno sólo que estaba por completo recubierto. Se distinguían las huellas de los dedos, que, aparentemente, se habían cuidado de cubrir de arena aquel espacio determinado. Ese sitio quedaba junto a los pedales del telar. Dunstan corrió hacia aquel sitio y escarbó la arena con el mango de su látigo. Al introducir la punta del collado entre los ladrillos, vio que éstos estaban sueltos. Se apresuró a quitar uno, y vio que allí estaba sin duda lo que buscaba, porque, ¿qué podía haber sino dinero en aquellas dos bolsas de cuero? Y a juzgar por su peso debían de estar llenas de guineas.

Dunstan registró bien en el agujero para convencerse de que no contenía nada más, y luego, volviendo a colocar en su sitio los ladrillos, los recubrió de arena. No hacía ni cinco minutos que había entrado a la choza, pero aquel espacio de tiempo le pareció muy largo, y bien que no sabía que Silas podía estar vivo y volver de un momento a otro, se sintió presa de un temor indefinible al ponerse de pie con los sacos en las manos. Se apresuró a salir, a guarecerse en la obscuridad y pensar en seguida qué haría con las bolsas. Cerró inmediatamente tras de él la puerta, para interceptar la salida de la luz: algunos pasos iban a bastar para llevarlo más allá del peligro de ser traicionado por los rayos que se filtraban a través de las rendijas de los postigos y el agujero de la alcoba. La lluvia y la obscuridad se habían vuelto más intensas; se regocijó de esto, bien que fuera incómodo caminar con las dos manos tan llenas, porque era a lo sumo si podía llevar el látigo con uno de los sacos. Pero así que hubiera dado dos pasos podría proceder con toda calma. Se adelantó, pues, resueltamente, en la obscuridad.



V

CUANDO DUNSTAN Cass le volvía la espalda a la choza, Silas Marner no estaba ni a cien pasos de allí. Volvía penosamente de la aldea. Una bolsa cargada al hombro le servía de sobretodo, y llevaba una linterna de cuerno en la mano. Sus piernas estaban cansadas, pero su espíritu, que no presentía ningún cambio, se sentía ágil. El sentimiento de la seguridad procede más frecuentemente del hábito que de la convicción; por eso es que subsiste a menudo, cuando las condiciones se han modificado de tal modo, que más bien debieran dar lugar a esperar que se volvieran una causa de alarma. El lapso de tiempo durante el cual cierto acontecimiento no se ha producido, es, según la lógica del hábito, constantemente opuesto como la razón por la cual ese acontecimiento no debe ocurrir nunca, aun mismo cuando ese lapso de tiempo es la condición nueva que lo hace inminente. Ese hombre os alega que ha trabajado cuarenta años en el interior de una mina, sin ser herido en un solo accidente, como el motivo por el que no debe temer ningún peligro, bien que el techo de la mina comience a ceder; y se observa a menudo que cuanto más vive un hombre, más difícil le es conservar una firme creencia en la idea de su muerte.

La influencia del hábito tenía que ser necesariamente poderosa en un hombre cuya vida era tan monótona como la de Marner. No viendo a nuevas gentes, y no oyendo hablar de ningún acontecimiento, no había nada que mantuviera despierto en él la idea de lo inesperado y del cambio. Eso explica también de una manera bastante sencilla por qué su espíritu podía estar tranquilo, aunque hubiera dejado su casa y su tesoro más expuestos que de costumbre.

Silas pensaba en su cena con doble satisfacción: en primer lugar sería caliente y sabrosa; en segundo lugar, no le costaba nada. En efecto, el pequeño trozo de cerdo era un regalo de la excelente dueña de casa, la señorita Priscila Lammeter, a quien había ido a llevar aquella tarde una linda pieza de hilo, y era sólo en tales circunstancias que Marner se permitía comer carne asada. La cena era su comida favorita, porque coincidía con la hora deliciosa para él en que le alegraba su contemplado tesoro.

Toda vez que llegaba a tener carne que asar, la reservaba para la comida. Pero esa tarde, apenas hubo terminado la operación consistente en anudar fuertemente una cuerda alrededor del trozo de puerco, arrollar a aquélla, según las reglas, en la llave de la puerta, pasarla a través del anillo y atarla al gancho de la chimenea, cuando se acordó de que le era indispensable un ovillo de cordoné muy fino para comenzar una pieza en el telar, al día siguiente muy temprano. Se había olvidado de eso porque al volver de casa del señor Lammeter no había tenido que atravesar la aldea; en cuanto a salir a hacer compras por la mañana no había que pensar. La niebla estaba muy fea para salir; pero había cosas que Silas prefería a sus comodidades. Subió, pues, el trozo de puerco a la extremidad del gancho, y luego, armándose de una linterna y de una bolsa vieja, se marchó a hacer aquella compra olvidada, que, con buen tiempo, sólo le hubiera tomado un cuarto de hora. No hubiera podido cerrar la puerta sin desatar la cuerda bien anudada y retrasar de ese modo la cena; no había para qué hacer ese sacrificio. ¿Qué ladrón tomaría el camino de las canteras con semejante noche, y por qué había de hacerlo precisamente esa noche, cuando no le había sucedido eso nunca en los quince años precedentes? Estas preguntas no se presentaban claramente al espíritu de Marner. Sólo sirven para indicar que vagamente se daba cuenta de las razones que tenía para estar exento de inquietud.



Muy contento con haber hecho la diligencia de la compra, llegó a su puerta y la abrió. Para sus ojos miopes todo estaba en el estado en que lo había dejado, a no ser que el fuego despedía una mayor y bienvenida cantidad de calor. Caminaba hacia una parte y otra del suelo, a la vez que se iba desprendiendo de la linterna, del sombrero y de la bolsa vieja; así es que sus zapatos herrados borraron las huellas que los pies de Dunstan habían dejado en la arena. En seguida bajó el trozo de cerdo cerca del fuego, y se sentó para proceder a la ocupación agradable de cuidar el asado y a la vez calentarse. Cualquiera que lo hubiese observado mientras que la luz rojiza brillaba en su rostro pálido, en sus ojos extraños y dilatados y sobre su cuerpo flaco, hubiera quizá comprendido la mezcla de piedad desdeñosa, de temor y de sospecha con que era mirado por sus vecinos de Raveloe. Sin embargo, pocos hombres podía haber más inofensivos que el pobre Marner. En su alma ingenua y sincera, ni aun la avaricia creciente y el culto de oro eran capaces de engendrar un solo vicio capaz de perjudicar directamente a nadie.

Habiéndose apagado la luz de su fe, y habiendo agotado sus afectos, se había apegado con todas las fuerzas de su naturaleza a su trabajo y a su dinero; y, como todos los objetos a que el hombre se consagra, esas cosas lo habían plasmado para adaptarlo a ellas. Su telar, en el que trabajaba sin reposo, había reaccionado sobre él, fortificando a su corazón el deseo de oír la repuesta de su ruido monótono. Y su tesoro, mientras estaba inclinado sobre él y lo veía crecer, conjuraría en su alma la facultad de amar, la endurecía y la aislaba como las monedas de metal que lo componían.

Así que sintió calor, se puso a pensar que sería muy largo esperar el fin de la comida para sacar sus guineas, y que le agradaría verlas en la mesa mientras que se diera aquel regalo insólito; porque la alegría es el mejor de los vinos, y las guineas de Marner eran un vino de esa especie.

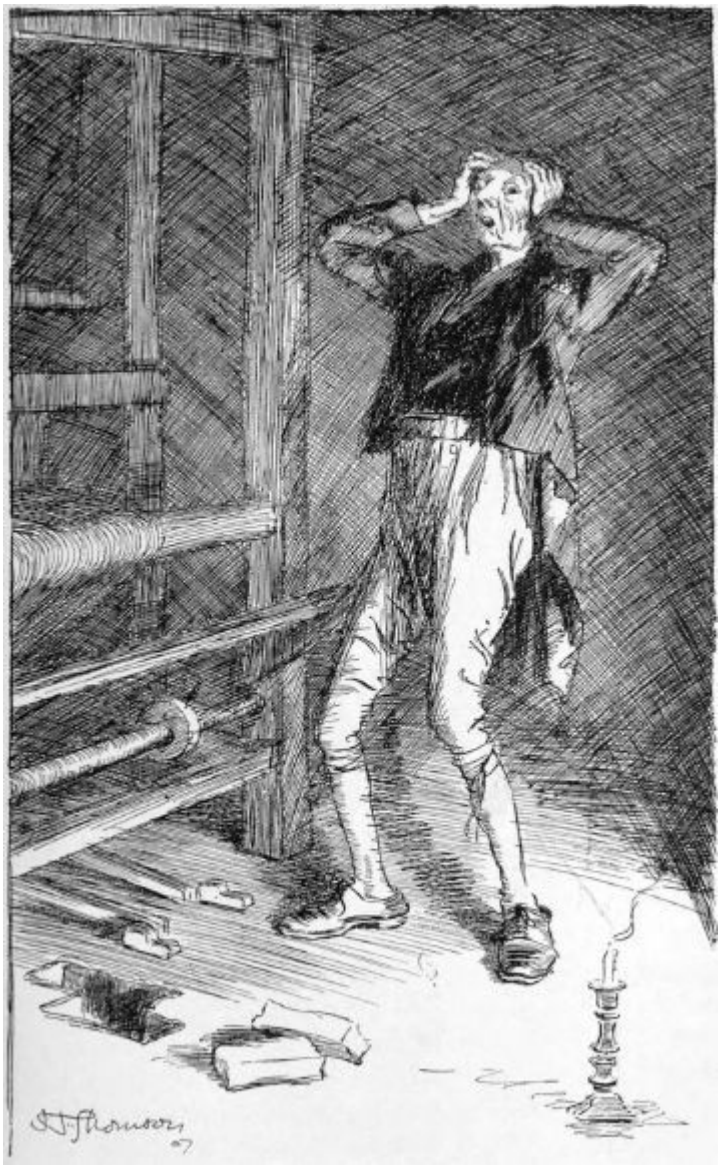
Se levantó y colocó la vela en el suelo, cerca del telar, no sospechando nada; después quitó la arena sin advertir ningún cambio, y sacó los ladrillos.

La vista del agujero vacío hizo latir su corazón con violencia; pero la convicción de que su oro ya no estaba allí, no la tuvo de inmediato; sólo sintió terror. Pasó la mano trémula por el escondite, tratando de imaginarse que era posible que sus ojos lo hubiesen engañado; después metió la vela en el agujero e hizo una inspección minuciosa, temblando cada vez más. Por fin su agitación fue tan violenta que dejó caer la vela y se llevó las manos a la cabeza, tratando de sostenerla, con el fin de poder pensar. ¿Acaso, por una determinación brusca, había puesto su tesoro en otra parte la noche precedente y, después lo había olvidado?

El hombre que cae en aguas tenebrosas, trata momentáneamente de hacer pie hasta sobre las piedras resbaladizas, y Silas, procediendo como si creyera en falsas esperanzas, aplazaba el momento de la desaparición. Buscó por todos los rincones, deshizo su cama, la sacudió y la palpó toda, después miró en el horno de ladrillo donde ponía a secar la leña. Cuando no quedó ningún otro sitio que visitar, se arrodilló de nuevo y registró otra vez el agujero. No le quedaba ya ningún refugio inexplorado que lo protegiera un momento más contra la terrible verdad.

Sí, le quedaba una especie de refugio que se presenta siempre cuando el pensamiento sucumbe bajo una pasión que lo abisma: era esa espera de las imposibilidades, esa creencia en las imágenes contradictorias que es, sin embargo, distinta de la locura, porque la realidad del hecho exterior puede hacerla desaparecer. Silas se irguió trémulo sobre las rodillas y miró alrededor de la mesa; ¿no estaría allí su oro, al fin y al cabo? La mesa estaba vacía. Entonces miró atrás suyo, recorrió con la vista toda la pieza, pareciendo dilatar sus pupilas negras para ver si, por casualidad, las bolsas, no aparecían en los sitios en que las había buscado en vano. Podía distinguir todos los objetos de su choza, pero su oro no estaba allí.

Se llevó de nuevo las manos trémulas a la cabeza y lanzó un grito salvaje y estrepitoso, el grito de la desesperación. Después, durante algunos momentos, permaneció inmóvil; pero aquel grito lo había librado de la primera opresión de la verdad, opresión que lo sofocaba, se volvió, adelantó vacilante hasta su telar y se sentó en el banco en que trabajaba habitualmente, buscando instintivamente aquel sitio, porque era para él la más grande certidumbre de la realidad.



Ahora que todas aquellas falsas esperanzas se habían desvanecido, y que la primera certidumbre había pasado, la idea de un ladrón comenzó a presentarse a su espíritu. La acogió rápidamente, puesto que era posible atrapar al ladrón y hacerle devolver el dinero. Aquel pensamiento le dio nuevas fuerzas. Se precipitó de su telar a la puerta. Al abrirla lo azotó una lluvia violenta, porque estaba lloviendo con fuerza cada vez mayor. No había que pensar en seguir la huella de los pasos con semejante noche. ¡Huellas de pasos! Pero ¿cuándo había estado allí el ladrón? Durante la ausencia de Silas, en el día, la puerta había permanecido cerrada con llave, y, cuando volvió antes de la noche, no había señales de fracción. También todo estaba como lo había dejado cuando regresó de comprar el cordoné. La arena y los ladrillos no parecían haber sido movidos. ¿Era realmente un ladrón el que había sacado los talegos?, ¿o era una potencia cruel, que ninguna mano podría alcanzar, que se había deleitado en sumirle por segunda vez en la desesperación? Retrocedió ante este terror más vago, e hizo un violento esfuerzo para confirmarse en la idea de que era un ladrón con manos, y que las manos pueden agarrar.

En un relámpago, el pensamiento de Marner recorrió a todos los vecinos que le habían hecho observaciones o preguntas que pudieran ser ahora interpretadas como motivos de sospecha.

Allí estaba Jacobo Rodney, cazador furtivo bien conocido, y que no gozaba de buena reputación, bajo otros respectos; se había encontrado a menudo con Marner, cuando éste tenía que hacer algunas diligencias atravesando campos y le había hecho algunas bromas respecto del dinero.

Además, había irritado a Marner un día, que habiendo entrado a su choza para encender la pipa, se había demorado cerca del fuego, en vez de ir a sus tareas. Jacobo Rodney era el ladrón; aquella idea le daba algún alivio. Se podía encontrar a Jacobo y hacerle devolver el dinero. Marner no quería castigarle, pero sí solo recuperar el oro que se había llevado consigo, dejando su alma en un aislamiento parecido al del viajero extraviado en un desierto desconocido. Había que poner la mano sobre el ladrón. Las ideas de Marner eran confusas; sin embargo, comprendía que debía ir a denunciar el robo, y los grandes personajes de la aldea —el pastor, el condestable y el *squire* Cass— le harían devolver a Jacobo Rodney o a cualquiera otra persona el dinero robado.

Estimulado por la esperanza salió afuera, olvidando de cubrirse la cabeza y sin preocuparse de cerrar la puerta, pues le parecía que ya no tenía nada que perder. Corrió rápidamente hasta que la falta de respiración lo obligó a acortar el paso al entrar en la aldea, en la vuelta del camino, cerca de la taberna del *Arco Iris*.

El Arco Iris, para los ojos de Marner, era un sitio suntuoso de reunión para los maridos opulentos y corpulentos, cuyas esposas tenían superfluas provisiones de lencería. Era el sitio en que tenía que encontrar probablemente a las autoridades y a los dignatarios de Raveloe; donde podría anunciar con mayor rapidez el robo de que había sido objeto.

Llegó a la puerta, abrió el pestillo y entró a la derecha en una taberna, especie de cocina brillantemente iluminada, en que los clientes menos considerados de la casa tenían la costumbre de reunirse. La pieza particular de la izquierda estaba reservada a la sociedad escogida, y allí el *squire* Cass gozaba con frecuencia el doble placer de la buena compañía y de la condescendencia. Pero aquella pieza estaba a obscuras porque los principales personajes que constituían el ornamento del círculo asistían todos —como Godfrey Cass— al baile dado por la señora Osgood.

De ahí resultaba que el grupo sentado en los bancos de alto respaldar de la taberna era más numeroso que de costumbre. Varios notables que, a no ser aquella circunstancia, hubiesen sido admitidos a los honores del gabinete particular y hubieran proporcionado la mejor ocasión a los que eran de un rango más elevado de echárselas de señores y tomar aires protectores, se contentaban con variar de placer tomando grogs, allí donde ellos mismos podían darse importancia y mostrarse afables, en la sociedad de simples bebedores de cerveza.

VI

LA CONVERSACIÓN, que era en extremo animada cuando Silas llegó al *Arco Iris*, había sido como de costumbre lánguida e intermitente al empezar a formarse la reunión.

Los clientes habituales habían comenzado por ponerse a fumar sus pipas en un silencio rayano en la gravedad. Los más importantes de ellos, los que bebían alcoholes y estaban sentados más cerca del fuego, se miraban los unos a los otros, como si hubieran apostado al que primero cerraría los ojos.

En cuanto a los bebedores de cerveza, gentes vestidas en su mayor parte con sacos de fustán o blancos, permanecían con los párpado cerrados y se pasaban la mano por la boca. Se hubiera dicho que absorber sus tragos de cerveza constituía para ellos un deber fúnebre, que desempeñaban con afligente tristeza.

Por fin, el señor Snell, el tabernero, hombre dispuesto a ser neutral y acostumbrado a permanecer alejado de las desinteligencias humanas, como inherentes a seres que tenían todos a igual título necesidad de beber, rompió el silencio diciéndole con tono indeciso a su primo el carnicero:



—¿Hay gentes que dirían que es un lindo animal el que trajisteis ayer, Bob?

El carnicero, hombre alegre, sonriente, de cabellos rojos, no era capaz de responder inconsiderablemente. Lanzó algunas bocanadas antes de escupir y dijo:

—No se engañarían en mucho, Juan.

Después de esta débil e ilusoria tentativa de romper el hielo, el silencio volvió a ser tan riguroso como antes.

—¿Era una vaca colorada de Durham? —dijo el herrador, reanudando el hilo del discurso después de varios minutos.

El herrador miró al tabernero y el tabernero miró al carnicero, como que era la persona que debía asumir la responsabilidad de la respuesta.

—¿Era colorada —dijo el carnicero, con una voz de falsete alegre, pero ronca— y era sin duda una vaca de Durham?

—Entonces no tenéis para qué decirme a mí a quién la habéis comprado —dijo el herrador mirando a su rededor con cierto aire de triunfo—, conozco a las personas que tienen vacas coloradas de Durham en las inmediaciones. ¿Apostaría dos peniques que tenía una estrella blanca en la frente?

El herrador se inclinó hacia adelante, con las manos en las rodillas, al hacer aquella pregunta, y sus ojos parpadearon con viveza.

—Pues bien, sí, es posible —dijo el carnicero con lentitud, considerando que hacía resueltamente una respuesta afirmativa—. No digo lo contrario.

—Estaba seguro —dijo el herrador con tono provocativo, echándose para atrás—, si yo no conociera las vacas del señor Lammeter, quisiera saber quién las conocería, nada más. Y en cuanto a la vaca que habéis comprado, barata o no, yo estaba allí cuando la purgaron; que me contradiga el que quiera.

El herrador tenía un aire amenazador, y el calor apacible que el carnicero ponía en la conversación, se animó un poco.

—Yo no soy hombre que contradiga a nadie, estoy por la paz y la tranquilidad. Hay personas que prefieren cortar las costillas largas. Por mi parte, soy de los que las cortan cortas; pero yo no me disputo con esas personas. Todo lo que digo es que es un lindo animal, y sólo al verlo a cualquier persona razonable se le llenan los ojos de lágrimas.

—Pues es la vaca que yo purgué, sea como sea —prosiguió el herrador colérico— y era la del señor Lammeter; si no es así, habéis mentido al decir que era una vaca colorada de Durham.

—No miento —dijo el carnicero con la misma voz apacible y ronca de antes—, y no contradigo a nadie. Ni aunque un hombre se pusiera azul de cólera, no lo contradeciría; no le compro carne; no hago negocios con él. Todo lo que digo es que es un lindo animal, y mantengo mi palabra; pero no quiero pelear con nadie.

—¡No, realmente —dijo el herrador con amargo sarcasmo, echando una mirada general sobre los circunstantes—, y puede que no seáis testarudo como una mula, y puede que no hayáis dicho que la vaca no era una Durham colorada, y puede que no hayáis dicho que tenía una estrella blanca en la frente! Sostened ahora eso, ya que estáis bien dispuesto.

—¡Vamos!, ¡vamos! —dijo el tabernero—, dejad a esa vaca tranquila. Los dos tenéis razón y los dos estáis equivocados, esto es lo que sostengo siempre. Y en cuanto a que la vaca fuera del señor Lammeter, no digo nada; pero lo que sostengo, y que es preciso se recuerde, es que el *Arco Iris* es el *Arco Iris*. Y para volver al asunto, si la conversación ha de referirse a los Lammeter, vos, señor Macey, sois el que mejor conocéis ese capítulo, ¿no es cierto? ¿Recordáis la época en que el señor Lammeter vino a este paraje y arrendó las Gazaperas?

El señor Macey era sastre y chantre de la parroquia. Sus reumatismos lo habían obligado hacía poco a compartir esta última función con un joven de facciones delicadas que estaba sentado frente a él. Inclinando su cabeza blanca hacia un costado y haciendo girar sus pulgares con un aire de satisfacción ligeramente acentuada con una pizca de crítica, sonrió con compasión en respuesta a la interpelación del tabernero y dijo:

—Sí, sí; es cierto, es cierto; pero dejo hablar a los demás. Ahora estoy retirado de los negocios y he cedido el puesto a los jóvenes. Dirigid vuestras preguntas a los que han ido a la escuela de Tarley: han aprendido la buena pronunciación: eso se ha puesto de moda hace poco tiempo.

—Si es a mí a quien aludís, señor Macey —dijo el chantre suplente con expresión de meticulosa urbanidad—, responderé que no soy hombre que hable cuando no debo. Como dice el salmo: Yo sé lo que es justo; eso no basta, practico también lo que sé.

—Pues bien, entonces, me gustaría que no os salierais del tono cuando se os lo apunta. Si sois de los que practican, me gustaría veros practicar eso —dijo un hombre gordo y jovial, excelente carretonero de oficio toda la semana, pero director del coro de la iglesia los domingos.

Al mismo tiempo que hablaba hizo señas con los ojos a dos personas de la reunión, que eran conocidos oficialmente con los nombres de «trombón» y «clarinete», con la seguridad de que expresaban la opinión del cuerpo musical de Raveloe.

El señor Tookey, el chantre suplente, que compartía la impopularidad común a los suplentes, se enrojeció mucho, pero repitió con moderación discreta:

—Señor Winthrop, si queréis decirme que lo hago mal, no soy hombre capaz de decir que no cambiaré. Pero hay personas que creen tener orejas infalibles, y que esperan que el coro entero tome a sus personas por modelo. Me parece que puede haber dos opiniones.

—Sí, sí —dijo el señor Macey, muy contento con aquel ataque a la juventud presuntuosa—, estáis en lo cierto, Tookey; siempre hay dos opiniones: hay la opinión que un hombre tiene de sí mismo y la opinión que los demás tienen de él. Habría dos opiniones sobre una campana rajada si ésta pudiera oírse a sí misma.

—Pero, señor Macey —dijo el pobre Tookey, que había permanecido serio en medio de la hilaridad general—, yo me he comprometido a llenar en parte las funciones del chantre de la parroquia a pedido del señor Crackenthorp, toda vez que vuestras molestias os incapaciten, y uno de los privilegios de esas funciones es cantar en el coro; y, si no, ¿por qué no hicisteis vos otro tanto?

—¡Ah!, pero el señor Macey y vos son dos cosas muy distintas —dijo Ben Winthrop—. El señor tiene un don natural. Mirad, el *squire* tenía la costumbre de invitarlo a tomar una copa solamente para oírle cantar el «Corsario rojo»; ¿no es cierto, señor Macey? Es un don natural. Si su amiguito Aarón tiene también un don natural, puede cantaros un aire cualquiera sin vacilar, como una alondra. Pero en cuanto a vos, maese Tookey, haríais bien en limitaros a vuestro amén. Vuestra voz no es mala cuando la guardáis en la nariz. Es vuestro interior el que está mal dispuesto para la música: no vale más que el hueco de un zueco.

Esta especie de franqueza inflexible era la forma de broma más picante ante los ojos de la sociedad del *Arco Iris*, y el insulto de Ben Winthrop fue considerado por todos como superior al epigrama del señor Macey.

—Ya veo claramente de qué se trata —dijo el señor Tookey, incapaz de permanecer tranquilo durante más tiempo—. Hay una conspiración para echarme del coro, a fin de que no perciba mi parte del dinero de Navidad. Eso es. Pero le hablaré al señor Crackenthorp; no permitiré que nadie se burle de mí.

—No, no, Tookey —dijo Ben Winthrop—. Os daremos vuestra parte para que os retiréis, eso es lo que haremos. Hay otras cosas que la mugre, que la gente pagaría de buena gana para verse libre de ellas.

—¡Vamos!, ¡vamos! —dijo el tabernero, que comprendía que pagar a la gente por su ausencia era un principio social peligroso—; una broma es una broma. Todos los que estamos aquí somos buenos amigos, me parece. Debemos dar para recibir. Los dos tenéis razón y los dos estáis equivocados; eso es lo que sostengo siempre. Yo opino como el señor Macey que hay dos opiniones, y si me pidieran la mía, yo diría que él y Winthrop los dos tienen razón. Tookey tiene razón y Winthrop también; no tienen más que cortar la pera en dos para estar de acuerdo.

El herrador fumaba su pipa con aire bastante hosco, con un cierto desdén por aquella discusión trivial. Él tampoco tenía oído para la música, y no iba nunca a la iglesia porque pertenecía al cuerpo médico, y podía ser requerido para las vacas en estado delicado. Pero el carnicero, que era músico en el alma, había escuchado la discusión haciendo a la vez votos por la derrota de Tookey y la conservación de la paz.

—Seguramente —dijo, entrando en las vistas conciliadoras del tabernero— que queremos a nuestro viejo chantre. Cantaba antes muy bien y tiene un hermano que goza fama de ser el mejor menestral de los alrededores. ¡Ah!, es muy sensible que Salomón no viva en nuestro pueblo, y que no pueda tocar alguna pieza cuando lo deseamos, ¿no es cierto, señor Macey? Le daría hígado y bofes de ternera gratis, palabra de honor.

—Sí, sí —dijo el señor Macey, en el colmo de la satisfacción—. En nuestra familia tenemos fama de músicos desde la época más remota. Pero estas cosas se van, como yo le digo a Salomón todas las veces que aparece por aquí; ya no hay voces como antaño, y nadie se acuerda de lo que nosotros nos acordamos, excepto de los viejos cuervos.

—Sí, os acordáis del tiempo en que el padre del señor Lammeter vino a establecerse aquí, ¿verdad, señor Macey? —dijo el tabernero.

—Ya lo creo —repuso el viejo chantre, que ahora había pasado por la serie de halagos necesarios para llevarle a comenzar su narración—. Era un lindo viejo, tan guapo, o quizás más, que el señor Lammeter existente actualmente. Venía de un punto cercano, del lado del norte, según pude saber. Pero nadie conoce

nada positivo acerca de esa región; pero su pueblo no debía estar muy al norte, y no debía sin duda ser muy distinto de éste, porque el señor Lammeter trajo consigo una linda raza de carneros, de modo que en aquella región había ciertamente apriscos y todo lo que es razonable encontrar. Hemos oído decir que había vendido sus propias tierras para venir a arrendar las Gazaperas. Eso parecía raro por parte de un hombre que tenía propiedades suyas, que viniese a alquilar una granja en un país que no conocía. Pero se dijo que era a causa de la muerte de su mujer, bien que haya en las cosas razones que nadie conoce. Eso es más o menos lo que pude saber. Pero hay personas tan instruidas que encontrarían en el acto cincuenta motivos imaginarios. Mientras tanto, la verdadera razón está ahí rompiéndoles los ojos, y, sin embargo, no la ven. En fin, pronto nos dimos cuenta de que había un nuevo vecino que estaba al cabo de las cosas, tenía una casa bien puesta y era muy estimado de todos. Y el joven —es decir, el señor Lammeter, existente actualmente, y que nunca tuvo hermana— se puso en seguida a festejar a la señorita Osgood, es decir, la hermana del señor Osgood actualmente existente. Era una joven tan bonita como no podríais formaros idea. Pretenden que su joven hija se le parece; pero de ese modo piensan las personas que no saben las cosas que pasaron antes de que ellos nacieran. En cuanto a mí, debo saberlo bien, porque ayudé al viejo pastor señor Drumlow.

Dicho esto, el señor Macey hizo una pausa. Despachaba su relato por entregas, haciendo pausas para ser interrogado, según la costumbre.

—Sí, y ocurrió una cosa particular. ¿No es cierto? De modo que vos, señor Macey, es probable que os acordéis de ese matrimonio —dijo el tabernero en tono halagador.

—Ya lo creo, como que fue una cosa muy particular —respondió el señor Macey inclinando la cabeza hacia un costado—. El señor Drumlow… yo lo quería mucho al pobre viejo señor, a pesar de que tenía la cabeza algo confusa, tanto a causa de su edad como a que tomaba un trago de algo caliente cuando el oficio de la mañana tenía lugar haciendo tiempo frío… y el joven señor Lammeter quiso a todo trance casarse en enero, mes que es, sin duda, poco razonable escoger, porque el casamiento no es como un bautismo o un entierro que no se puede aplazar. Ahora bien, cuando el señor Drumlow… el pobre viejo señor, yo lo quería… cuando el viejo señor Drumlow llegó a las preguntas, las hizo en sentido contrario, por así decirlo. Dijo: «¿Queréis tomar a este hombre por vuestra mujer legítima?». En seguida preguntó: «¿Queréis tomar esta mujer por vuestro legítimo marido?». Pero, lo mejor del caso, es que sólo yo me di cuenta de aquello, y que los novios contestaron en seguida «sí» como si yo mismo hubiera dicho amén cuando debía, sin haber escuchado lo que precedía.

—Pero vos sabíais bien lo que estaba pasando, ¿verdad, señor Macey? ¿Vos no hacíais oídos sordos, no es cierto? —dijo el carnicero.

—¡Dios mío! —prosiguió el señor Macey, haciendo una pausa y sonriendo al ver la pobre imaginación de su auditorio—; yo estaba tembloroso; yo estaba, por así decirlo, como una levita tirada por los dos faldones, porque no podía detener al pastor, no podía echarme encima esa responsabilidad. Sin embargo, pensaba, ¿y si no estuvieran bien casados, porque las palabras han sido dichas al revés? Después mi cabeza se puso a trabajar como un molino, porque siempre ha sido extraordinaria para volver y revolver las cosas, y encaminarlas por todos sus costados. En seguida me dije: «¿No será más bien el espíritu que las palabras lo que hace el matrimonio indisoluble?». En efecto, el pastor procedía de buena fe, y el novio y la novia también. Y entonces, cuando me puse a reflexionar, vi que el espíritu significaba bien poca cosa en la mayor parte de los hechos, puesto que vos queréis poder pegar varios objetos juntos y la cola ser mala, y en ese caso, ¿qué resulta? Entonces llegué a esta conclusión: «No es el espíritu lo que vale, es la cola». Y me sentía tan atormentado como si tuviera tres campanas echadas a vuelo en mi cabeza cuando pasamos a la sacristía, y se comenzó a firmar. ¿Pero para qué sirven tantas palabras? Vosotros no podéis imaginaros lo que pasa en el espíritu de un hombre inteligente.

—Sin embargo, ¿os contuvisteis a pesar de todo?, señor Macey, ¿no es cierto? —dijo el tabernero.

—Sí, me contuve por completo, hasta que me encontré solo con el señor Drumlow. Entonces se lo dije todo, respetuosamente, sin embargo, como siempre. El pastor tomó la cosa ligeramente, y dijo: «¡Bah!, ¡bah! Macey, tranquilizaos; no es el espíritu ni la letra lo que vale: es el registro del casamiento lo que resuelve el caso; ésa es la cola». De modo que ya veis que resolvió el caso fácilmente. Los pastores y los doctores lo saben todo, por decirlo así, de memoria, y no los mortifica la preocupación de distinguir los lados buenos y malos de las cosas, como a mí me ha sucedido tantas veces. Y de lo que no cabe duda es que el casamiento resultó feliz. Lo malo es que la pobre señora Lammeter, antes señorita Osgood, murió antes de que sus hijos fueran grandes. Sea como fuera, en lo que concierne a la prosperidad de todo lo que es honorable, no hay familia que sea más considerada que ésa.

Todo el auditorio del señor Macey había oído aquella historia repetidas veces. Sin embargo, la oyeron

como quien escucha un aire favorito, y en ciertos pasajes dejaron un momento de fumar las pipas, a fin de consagrar toda su atención a las palabras que esperaban. Pero no había concluido aún aquello, porque el señor Snell hizo a tiempo la pregunta que debía motivar la continuación del relato.

—A propósito, ¿no se ha dicho que el viejo señor Lammeter poseía una bonita fortuna cuando vino a este país?

—Sí, es exacto —repuso el señor Macey—; pero el señor Lammeter, actualmente existente, no ha podido hacer otra cosa que conservarla intacta, según creo. Siempre se ha dicho que nadie podía enriquecerse en las Gazaperas. Y, sin embargo, arrienda la propiedad barata, porque es lo que se llama un bien de fundación.

—Sí; hay pocas personas que sepan tan exactamente como vos cómo se volvió esa tierra un bien de fundación, ¿no es cierto, señor Macey? —dijo el carnicero.

—¿Y cómo lo sabrían? —replicó el viejo chantre con cierto desprecio—. Pero mi abuelo hizo la librea de los *grooms* de ese señor Cliff que vino a edificar las caballerizas de las Gazaperas. Son caballerizas cuatro veces más grandes que las del *squire* Cass, porque Cliff sólo pensaba en caballos y en cacerías. Era un sastre de Londres que, según decían algunas personas, se había vuelto loco a fuerza de engañar a la gente. No podía montar a caballo. Pretenden que no podía apretar el caballo, como si sus piernas fueran tenacillas. Mi abuelo le oyó contar eso al viejo *squire* Cass repetidas veces. Sin embargo, quería andar a caballo a todo trance, como si lo impulsara el demonio. Tenía un hijo, un mozo de diez y seis años, y su padre no quería que hiciera otra cosa más que entregarse continuamente a la equitación, bien que, según refieren, a ese joven lo asustara la equitación. Todos decían que el padre quería quitarle al hijo todo lo que tenía este de sastre, para convertirlo en un gentilhombre a fuerza de hacerlo montar a caballo. «No es porque sea sastre; pero, considerando que Dios me ha colocado en esta condición, estoy orgulloso de ello», porque las palabras «Macey, sastre», fueron inscriptas encima de nuestra puerta, antes de que la efigie de la reina Ana desapareciera de los chelines. En cuanto a Cliff, tenía vergüenza de que lo llamaran sastre. Además, lo mortificaba cruelmente que se burlaran de su manera de montar, y ninguna persona de distinción de la vecindad lo podía soportar. Entretanto, su pobre hijo cayó enfermo y murió. El padre no le sobrevivió mucho. Se había puesto más extravagante que nunca. Cuentan que iba a sus caballerizas a altas horas de la noche, provisto con una linterna y que colocaba en ellas muchas velas encendidas. Había llegado a no poder dormir, y se lo pasaba allí, haciendo chasquear el látigo y mirando los caballos. También se ha dicho que es un milagro que las caballerizas no quedaran reducidas a escombros, con los pobres animales encerrados en ellas. Pero, por fin, murió delirando, y se encontró que había dejado sus propiedades —las Gazaperas y el resto— a una fundación de Londres. Así fue cómo las Gazaperas se volvieron un bien de fundación. Sin embargo, por lo que concierne a las caballerizas, el señor Lammeter no las ha usado nunca porque son de proporciones exorbitantes. ¡Dios mío! Si hiciera golpear las puertas habría en la mitad de la parroquia un estruendo igual al del trueno.

—Sí; pero en esas caballerizas pasan más cosas que las que pasan en pleno día, ¿no es cierto, señor Macey? —dijo el tabernero.

—Sí, sí, pasad por allí una noche obscura —dijo el señor Macey parpadeando misteriosamente los ojos —, y después haced creer, si queréis, que no habéis visto luces en las caballerizas y que no habéis oído el piafar de los caballos ni el chasquear del látigo, ni aullidos, cuando empieza a clarear el día. Desde mi infancia, siempre oí decir que eso era la «licencia de Cliff», pues ciertas personas pretendían que, por decirlo así, ése era el momento en que el demonio dejaba de asarlo. Eso es lo que me contó mi padre, que era un hombre de buen sentido, bien que ahora haya personas que sepan lo que pasó antes que ellas nacieran mejor de lo que entienden sus negocios.

—¿Qué decís de esto, eh, Dowlas? —dijo el tabernero, volviéndose hacia el herrador que ardía de impaciencia por tomar la palabra—. Ahí tenéis un buen problema para vos.

El señor Dowlas era el espíritu escéptico de la reunión, y estaba orgulloso de ese título.

—¿Lo que digo? Digo lo que diría un hombre de buen sentido que no cerrara los ojos para mirar un poste indicador, si tuviera necesidad de averiguar su camino; digo que estoy dispuesto a apostar diez libras esterlinas con toda persona que quiera ir junto conmigo, durante cualquier noche que haga buen tiempo, a los terrenos que quedan frente a las caballerizas de las Gazaperas, y digo que no veremos luces y que no oiremos más ruidos que el soplar de nuestras narices. Eso es lo que digo, y he dicho muchas veces. Pero no hay nadie que quiera arriesgar un billete de diez libras por esos fantasmas de que se habla con tanta seguridad.

—Pero, Dowlas, no es muy ingenioso en verdad hacer una apuesta en tales condiciones —dijo Ben Winthrop—. Lo mismo podríais apostar con un hombre que no atrapará un romadizo, si pasa la noche

metido en el charco, con el agua hasta el pescuezo, durante un tiempo glacial. Tendría gracia que alguien se expusiera a morir por ganar una apuesta. Las gentes que creen en la licencia de Cliff, no se atreverán jamás a acercarse a aquel lugar por diez libras esterlinas.

—Si el señor Dowlas quiere conocer la verdad sobre este asunto —dijo el señor Macey con sonrisa sarcástica, golpeándose los pulgares el uno contra el otro—, no tiene para qué hacer apuestas; que vaya allá solo, nadie se lo impedirá. Entonces podrá decirles a los vecinos de la parroquia que están equivocados.

—¡Gracias!, le quedo agradecido —dijo el herrador con un gruñido de desprecio—. Si las gentes son tontas, no es cosa mía. Yo no tengo necesidad de averiguar la verdad sobre los aparecidos; ya lo sé. Pero no me opongo a una apuesta, con tal de que todo sea leal y sincero. Que apuesten conmigo diez libras esterlinas a si voy a ver la licencia de Cliff, e iré a estar allá solo. No necesito compañía. Y lo haría con tanta facilidad como cargo mi pipa.

—¿Pero quién os vigilará, Dowlas, para confirmar que estáis allá? La apuesta no sería leal.

—¿La apuesta no sería leal? —replicó el señor Dowlas con cólera—. Quisiera, que se presentara alguien que dijese que quiero apostar deslealmente. Vamos, vamos, maese Lundy, quisiera oíros decir eso.

—Muy probablemente lo querríais —dijo el carnicero—. Eso no es cuenta mía. No tengo que hacer tratos con vos, y no voy a tratar de que me hagáis una rebaja. Si alguien desea haceros una oferta igual a vuestra estimación, que lo haga. Yo estoy por la paz y la tranquilidad, eso es.

—Sí, eso es lo que desea todo, perro que ladra así que se le amenaza con el palo —dijo el herrador—. Pero yo no tengo miedo ni de un hombre ni de un fantasma, y estoy pronto a apostar lealmente. Yo no soy un gozquejo que dispara.

—Sí, pero ved lo que sucede, Dowlas —dijo el tabernero con una voz llena de candor y de tolerancia—. Hay gentes, a mi entender, que no pueden ver un fantasma, aunque éstos se los pongan por delante como un poste. Y esto tiene su razón de ser. Por ejemplo, ahí tenéis a mi mujer que no huele nada, aunque le pongáis bajo las narices el queso más fuerte. Yo nunca he visto fantasmas; pero entonces me digo: «Muy probablemente tú no tienes el olfato necesario». Es decir, que pongo el fantasma en lugar de un olor y viceversa. Por eso es que estoy por las dos opiniones. Como siempre digo, la verdad está entre los dos. Si Dowlas fuese a pasar la noche delante de las caballerizas y viniese a decirnos que no ha visto el menor rastro de la licencia de Cliff, yo estaría con él; pero si alguien me dijese que, a pesar de ello, la licencia de Cliff existe realmente, yo también estaría con él, porque el olfato es lo que me guía.

El argumento analógico del tabernero no fue bien aceptado por el herrador, que era un hombre fundamentalmente opuesto a los términos medios.

—¡Bah!, ¡bah!, ¡bah! —dijo con nueva irritación, dejando el vaso—, ¿qué tiene que ver aquí el olfato? ¿Un fantasma le ha puesto nunca a nadie negro el ojo? Eso es lo que desearía saber. Si los fantasmas quieren que crea en ellos, que se dejen de deslizarse furtivamente en los sitios obscuros y solitarios; que vengan a donde hay gente y luz.

—¡Como si a los aparecidos les importara que crea en ellos un hombre tan ignorante como vos! —dijo el señor Macey, profundamente desalentado de ver en el herrador aquella grosera incapacidad para comprender la naturaleza de los fenómenos concernientes a los fantasmas.

VII

UN MOMENTO después, sin embargo, pareció que los fantasmas fueran de naturaleza más condescendiente que lo que pretendía el señor Macey, porque de pronto se vio la figura pálida y flaca de Silas Marner. De pie entre la luz cálida de la pieza, no profería palabra, pero giraba por la asamblea la mirada de sus ojos extraños y sobrenaturales. Las largas pipas hicieron un movimiento simultáneo, como el de las arterias de insectos asustados. Todos los presentes, sin exceptuar al escéptico herrador, tuvieron la impresión de que veían a un aparecido y no a Silas Marner en carne y hueso. En efecto, la puerta por que había entrado Silas estaba oculta por los bancos de alto respaldar, y nadie había advertido su llegada.

Se podría suponer que el señor Macey, sentado muy lejos del aparecido, gozaba con el triunfo de sus argumentos, triunfos que debían tender a neutralizar su parte en la alarma general. ¿No había dicho siempre que cada vez que Silas Marner tenía un extraño éxtasis, su alma se libraba de su cuerpo? La prueba estaba allí. Sin embargo, todo bien considerado, no hubiera estado menos satisfecho sin la aparición. Durante algunos instantes reinó un silencio de muerte: el cansancio y el jadeo no le dejaban hablar a Marner. El tabernero, impulsado por el sentimiento que constantemente le animaba, que era su deber de tener casa abierta para todos y confiando en la protección de su inconmovible neutralidad, tomó al fin sobre sí la tarea de conjurar el espíritu.



—Maese Marner —dijo con tono conciliador—, ¿qué queréis?, ¿qué venís a traer aquí?

—¡Robado! —respondió Silas, jadeante—. ¡He sido robado! Busco al constable… y al juez… y al *squire* Cass… y al señor Crackenthorp.

—Sujetadlo, Jacobo Rodney —prosiguió el tabernero, en quien se disipaba la idea del fantasma—. Me parece que ha perdido la cabeza; está empapado hasta los huesos.

Jacobo Rodney, sentado muy cerca de la entrada de la pieza, estaba al alcance del sitio en que Marner seguía de pie; pero negó sus servicios.

—Venid a sujetarlo vos mismo, señor Snell, si se os ocurre —respondió Jacobo con bastante mal humor —. Ha sido robado y asesinado también a lo que parece —agregó en voz baja.

—¡Jacobo Rodney! —dijo Silas, volviéndose hacia él y clavando sus ojos extraños en el hombre que sospechaba.

—¿Qué hay, maese Marner, qué me queréis? —replicó Jacobo, temblando un poco y asiendo su jarro a manera de arma defensiva.

—Si sois vos quien me ha robado mi dinero —dijo juntando sus manos suplicantes, y alzando la voz hasta gritar—, devolvédmelo y os… daré una guinea.

—¡Yo… robado su dinero! —replicó Jacobo, colérico—; os voy a tirar este jarro a las narices si decís que soy… yo, el que ha robado vuestro dinero.

—Vamos, vamos, maese Marner —dijo el tabernero, poniéndose de pie entonces con aire resuelto y tomando a Marner por un hombro—; si tenéis que hacer alguna denuncia, hacedla de un modo razonable y demostrad que estáis en vuestro buen sentido; de otro modo nadie os escuchará. Estáis empapado como una rata ahogada. Sentaos, secad vuestra ropa y hablad con franqueza.

—¿Habéis oído, viejo? —continuó el herrador, que comenzó a darse cuenta de que no se había portado de una manera digna de él y a la altura de la situación—. No sigáis mirando fijamente a las personas y no gritéis más, porque, si no, vamos a haceros maniatar como a un insensato. Por eso fue que no hablé en seguida, diciéndome: este buen hombre está loco.

—Sí, sí, hacedlo sentar —dijeron en coro varios de los asistentes, muy contentos con que la existencia de los aparecidos quedara sin resolver.

El tabernero le obligó a Marner a quitarse el saco, y después a sentarse en una silla en medio de un círculo de modo que, apartado de las personas, recibiera directamente el calor de la chimenea.

El tejedor, demasiado abatido para tener más propósito claro que el de conseguir auxilio, a fin de recuperar su dinero, se sometió sin resistencias. Los temores pasajeros de la reunión habían desaparecido, sucediéndoles un vivo sentimiento de curiosidad, y todas las fisonomías estaban hacia Silas, cuando el tabernero, después de volverse a sentar, habló de nuevo.

—Bueno, veamos, maese Marner, qué es lo que tenéis que decir… decís que os han robado. Explicaos claramente.

—¡Haría bien en no volver a decir que soy yo quien lo ha robado! —exclamó Jacobo Rodney con energía—. ¿Qué habría hecho con su dinero? También hubiera podido robar la sobrepelliz del pastor y ponerla encima.

—Contened vuestra legua, Jacobo, y escuchemos lo que tiene que decir —prosiguió el tabernero—. Vamos, hablad, maese Marner.

Entonces Silas contó lo que le pasaba, y fue frecuentemente interrumpido por las preguntas a medida que el carácter misterioso del robo se volvía evidente.

Aquella situación extraña y nueva para él de tener que exponer sus cuitas a los vecinos de Raveloe, de estar sentado al calor de un hogar que no era el suyo, y de sentirse en presencia de fisonomías y de voces que hacían nacer en él las primeras esperanzas de socorro, ejerció sin duda alguna cierta influencia sobre Marner, a pesar de la viva preocupación que le causaba el infortunio. Nuestra conciencia no percibe el principio de un desarrollo moral, como no percibe un desarrollo de la naturaleza; la savia ha circulado ya muchas veces antes de que descubramos el menor signo de un brote.

La ligera sospecha con que sus oyentes le habían escuchado al principio, se disipó gradualmente ante la sencillez convincente de su desgracia. Les era imposible a aquellos vecinos dudar de la veracidad de Marner. No podían, a decir verdad, basándose en la naturaleza de los hechos relatados por él, afirmar inmediatamente que no tenía motivos para exponerlos con fealdad; pero, como lo hizo observar el señor Macey, no es probable que personas que tienen al diablo en su favor, se abatieran tanto como el pobre Silas. Más bien, dada la circunstancia extraña de que el ladrón no había dejado rastro y había sabido el momento oportuno en que Silas había salido sin cerrar la puerta, momentos que un oyente mortal no hubiera podido

calcular de ningún modo, la conclusión más natural que podía sacar parecía ser que la intimidad poco honorable del tejedor con el diablo, si es que había existido nunca, debía estar destruida. Por lo tanto, aquel mal golpe le había sido hecho a Marner por alguien a quien en balde perseguiría el constable. Qué motivo habría tenido el ladrón sobrenatural para verse obligado necesariamente a esperar que Silas se olvidara de cerrar la puerta con llave, no se le ocurrió a nadie.

—No ha sido Jacobo Rodney quien ha hecho eso, maese Marner —dijo el tabernero—. No hay por qué sospechar del pobre Jacobo. Quizá hubiera que arreglar una cuentecita con él a propósito de una lucha o dos, si uno hubiera de estar siempre con los ojos bien abiertos y no cerrarlos nunca. Pero Jacobo ha estado toda la tarde bebiendo aquí su jarro de cerveza, como la persona más honorable de la parroquia. Ya estaba aquí antes de la hora en que, según vuestra declaración, salisteis de vuestra casa, maese Marner.

—Sí, sí —prosiguió el señor Macey—; no acusemos al inocente. Eso es contrario a la ley. Es preciso que haya personas que juren que un hombre es culpable, antes que pueda ser detenido. No acusemos al inocente, maese Marner.

La memoria de Silas no estaba tan dormida, que no fuera capaz de despertar al oír aquellas palabras. Bajo la influencia de un movimiento de arrepentimiento, tan nuevo y extraño para él como lo hubiera sido cualquiera otra cosa en la hora en que acababa de transcurrir, se alzó de su silla y se acercó a Jacobo para ver claramente la expresión de su fisonomía.

—He hecho mal —le dijo—, sí, sí… debí reflexionar. No hay ninguna prueba contra vos, Jacobo. Pero vos sois la persona que más ha entrado en mi casa. Por eso fue que os recordé. No os acuso. No quiero acusar a nadie. Solamente —agregó con su ofuscación desesperada, tomándose la cabeza entre las manos y volviéndose a mirar a los presentes— me esfuerzo… me esfuerzo por imaginar dónde están mis guineas.

—¡Ah, ah!, han ido a donde hace bastante calor para fundirlas, creo —dijo el señor Macey.

—¡Vamos! —repuso el herrador.

Y preguntó entonces con el aire de un juez que le hace al testigo preguntas capciosas:

—¿Cuánto dinero podía haber en los talegos, maese Marner?

—Doscientas setenta y dos libras esterlinas, doce chelines y medio chelín, había ayer noche cuando las conté —dijo Silas exhalando un suspiro y volviéndose a sentar.

—¡Bah! No era tan pesado de cargar. Entró el vagabundo, y se las llevó. En cuanto a la ausencia de pasos, y a los ladrillos y la arena que no habían sido removidos, vuestros ojos son bastante parecidos a los de un insecto, maese Marner; estáis obligado a mirar de tan cerca, que no podéis ver muchas cosas a la vez. Me parece que si hubiese estado en vuestro lugar, o vos en el mío —pues viene a ser lo mismo—, no os habríais imaginado que todo estaba como lo habíais dejado. He aquí lo que propongo: que dos hombres de los más sensatos aquí presentes vayan con vos a casa del señor Kench, el constable —está enfermo en cama, según he oído—, para pedirle que nombre a uno de nosotros su suplente; porque ésa es la ley, y no creo que nadie piense en contradecirme sobre este punto. No queda muy lejos de aquí lo del señor Kench. Entonces, si soy yo el nombrado suplente, iré con vos, maese Marner, y examinaré el sitio. En caso de que alguien quiera contradecir esto, le agradeceré que se ponga de pie y lo diga con franqueza.

Con este discurso importante, el herrador había recuperado su propia estima, y esperaba que se le designara como uno de los hombres más sensatos.

—Veamos, entretanto, qué tiempo hace —dijo el tabernero, que se consideraba como personalmente interesado en aquella proposición—. ¡Pero si, sigue lloviendo a cántaros! —agregó en seguida de abrir la puerta.

—Pues bien, yo no soy hombre que le tenga miedo a la lluvia —dijo el herrador—. Hará mal efecto cuando el juez Malam sepa que se nos ha hecho una denuncia a gentes honorables como nosotros, y que no hicimos nada para atenderla.

El tabernero fue de la misma opinión, y después de haber pedido el asentimiento de los presentes y de haber repetido debidamente una pequeña ceremonia conocida en el alto clero con el nombre de «Nolo episcopari» (no quiero ser obispo), consintió en aceptar el refrigerante honor de ir a casa del señor Kench. Pero, con gran espanto del herrador, la proposición que él hiciera de ser suplente de constable levantó una objeción de parte del señor Macey. Aquel viejo oráculo, que pretendía conocer la ley, declaró que ningún médico podía ser constable, que ese hecho le había sido transmitido por su padre.

—Y usted es médico, me parece, aunque no sea usted más que médico veterinario; porque una mosca es una mosca, aun cuando sea un tábano —dijo para terminar el señor Macey, algo maravillado por su sagacidad.

Un violento debate se produjo con este motivo. El herrador, por supuesto, no quería renunciar a su título de médico, pero sostenía que un médico podía ser constable si quería, que el sentido de la ley era

sencillamente que no se le podía obligar a ser constable si no lo deseaba. El señor Macey consideró esta interpretación como un absurdo, visto que la ley no podía tener más diferencias con los médicos que con las demás personas. Agregó que si estaba en la naturaleza de los médicos el desear menos que los demás mortales el ser constable, ¿cómo era que el señor Dowlas deseaba tanto proceder en aquella calidad?

—Yo no deseo desempeñar el papel de constable —replicó el herrador, dominado por aquel razonamiento implacable—. Nadie puede decir que eso me importa, si se ha de hablar sinceramente. Pero si ha de haber celosos y envidiosos a propósito de esta diligencia acerca del señor Kench con un tiempo semejante, que vaya el que quiera, no me haréis ir a mí, yo os lo aseguro.

Sin embargo, mediante la intervención del tabernero, todo se arregló.

Así es que el pobre Silas, escoltado por sus dos compañeros y provisto con unas ropas viejas, salió de nuevo bajo la lluvia, pensando en las largas noches que aun faltaban por transcurrir, no como aquellos que ansían descansar, sino como los que veían esperando la mañana.

VIII

CUANDO GODFREY Cass volvió de la fiesta de la señora Osgood, a media noche, no lo sorprendió mucho el saber que Dunsey no había vuelto a la casa. Quizá no habría vendido a *Relámpago* esperando otra ocasión; quizá, a causa de la niebla de la tarde, había preferido refugiarse en la posada del *León Rojo* de Batterley, para pasar allí la noche, si la cacería lo había retenido en las cercanías, porque no era muy probable que se sintiera muy contrariado por dejar a su hermano en la incertidumbre. El espíritu de Godfrey estaba muy absorbido por los atractivos y maneras de Nancy para con él, demasiado lleno de exasperación contra sí mismo y contra su suerte —exasperación que no dejaba nunca de producirse en él, a la vista de aquella joven—, para que pensara mucho en *Relámpago* y en la conducta probable de Dunstan.

A la mañana siguiente toda la aldea fue sorprendida por la historia del robo.

Godfrey, como todos los demás, pasó el tiempo en recoger y discutir las noticias y en ir a visitar las canteras. La lluvia había hecho desaparecer toda probabilidad de distinguir los pasos; pero un examen minucioso del sitio había hecho descubrir, en dirección opuesta a la aldea, una caja de yesca medio enterrada en el lodo y que contenía un eslabón y un pedernal.

No era la caja de yesca de Silas, porque la única que hubiera poseído nunca estaba aún, sobre un estante, en su casa. La opinión generalmente aceptada, fue que la caja encontrada en el foso tenía alguna relación con el robo. Una pequeña minoría sacudía la cabeza y daba a entender que aquél no era un robo respecto del cual pudieran arrojar mucha luz las cajas de yesca.

En cuanto al de maese Marner parecía singular, y se habían conocido casos en que un hombre, después de haberse causado a sí mismo algún daño, había después requerido al juez para buscar al autor. Pero cuando se asediaba a esas gentes preguntándoles los motivos de su opinión y el provecho que tales falsos pretextos podían proporcionarle a maese Marner, se contentaban con menear la cabeza como antes y hacían observar que no siempre se estaba en aptitud de saber qué es lo que algunas personas consideran un beneficio; además, todo el mundo tenía el derecho de tener su opinión motivada o no, y el tejedor, como nadie lo ignoraba, no tenía el cerebro muy sano.

El señor Macey, bien que tomara la defensa de Marner contra toda sospecha de superchería, ponía también en ridículo la idea de la caja de yesca. En verdad, la reputaba como una sugestión bastante impía, tendiente a insinuar que todo debía de ser obra de manos humanas y que no había ningún poder sobrenatural capaz de hacer desaparecer las guineas sin tocar los ladrillos. Sin embargo, se volvió contra el señor Tookey con bastante violencia cuando aquel suplente adicto, viendo que aquella interpretación de los hechos sentaba particularmente a un chantre de parroquia la llevó más lejos aún, preguntándose si era razonable hacer una encuesta sobre un robo cuyas circunstancias eran tan misteriosas.

—Como si no hubiera nada más —terminó diciendo el señor Tookey— que aquellas cosas que los jueces y los constables están en aptitud de descubrir.

—No vayáis ahora, Tookey, más allá de donde se debe —repuso el señor Macey, inclinando la cabeza hacia un costado, en señal de reprobación. Así es como procedéis siempre: si yo arrojo una piedra y doy en el blanco, pensáis que hay algo mejor que hacer y tratáis de tirar otra vez más allá de la mía. Lo que he dicho iba contra la caja de yesca; no he dicho nada contra los jueces y los constables; porque han sido nombrados por el rey Jorge y le sentaría mal a un funcionario parroquial estallar en invectivas contra el soberano.

Mientras estas discusiones tenían lugar en el grupo que se encontraba frente a la taberna del *Arco Iris*, una deliberación más importante tenía lugar en el interior bajo la presidencia del señor Crackenthorp, el pastor, asistido por el *squire* Cass y otras personalidades de la parroquia. Se le acababa de ocurrir al señor Snell —que era, como lo hizo observar, un hombre habituado a coordinar los hechos— el relacionar con la

caja de yesca, que en calidad de suplente del constable había tenido él mismo la honrosa distinción de encontrar, con ciertos recuerdos de un buhonero. Éste había entrado en su taberna para beber algo haría cosa de un mes, y había declarado positivamente que llevaba una caja de yesca que le servía para encender su pipa. Había en aquello, sin duda, una pista para seguir. Y como la memoria, cuando está debidamente impregnada en los hechos comprobados, es algunas veces de una fecundidad sorprendente, el señor Snell recobró gradualmente la viva impresión del efecto que la fisonomía y la conversación del buhonero habían producido en él. La mirada de aquel hombre estaba llena de una cierta expresión que había chocado de un modo desagradable al sensible organismo del señor Snell. Seguramente que nada de particular había salido de su boca —no, nada, excepto la frase relativa a la caja de yesca—; pero lo que un hombre dice, no es lo que vale, lo importante es cómo lo dice. Además tenía un color moreno exótico que anunciaba su poca honradez.

—¿Llevaba aros en las orejas? —preguntó el señor Crackenthorp, que tenía algún conocimiento de las costumbres extranjeras.

—Bueno… esperad… veremos —respondió el señor Snell como un somnámbulo dócil que quisiera realmente no equivocarse, si fuera posible.

Después de haber distendido los ángulos de su boca y contraído los ojos —se hubiera dicho que trataba de ver los aros—, pareció renunciar al esfuerzo y dijo:

—Recuerdo que llevaba en su caja aros para vender; es, pues, natural suponer que también los usara. Pero como recorrió casi todas las casas de la aldea, quizá alguna persona se los haya visto en las orejas, bien que yo no pueda afirmar eso.

El señor Snell tenía razón al suponer que alguna otra persona se acordaría de los aros en las orejas; porque, prosiguiendo la pesquisa en la parroquia, se hizo saber, con una energía cada vez más viva, que el pastor deseaba ser informado si el buhonero usaba aros, y se estableció una corriente de opinión de que era muy importante que el hecho fuera dilucidado. Naturalmente que todos los que oyeron la pregunta y que no se habían formado ninguna imagen exacta del buhonero «sin aros», se lo representaron inmediatamente «con aros» en las orejas, más o menos grandes, según el caso. La imagen fue muy pronto tomada por un recuerdo vivo. En consecuencia, la esposa del vidriero, mujer de buenas intenciones y que no era aficionada a mentir y cuya casa era una de las más ordenadas de la aldea, se mostró dispuesta a declarar que, tan cierto como que había de comulgar para la próxima Navidad, que había visto unos grandes aros, de la forma del creciente de la luna nueva, en las dos orejas del buhonero. Al mismo tiempo Juana Oates, la hija del zapatero —niña dotada de una imaginación muy viva—, afirmaba no sólo que los había visto, sino que se había estremecido de horror, como se estremecía todavía al hablar de eso.



Por otra parte, a fin de arrojar más luz sobre esta pista de la caja de yesca, se recogió en las diferentes casas todos los artículos comprados al buhonero y se los llevó a la taberna del *Arco Iris* para ser expuestos allí públicamente. En fin, la convicción general en la aldea fue que, a fin de poner en claro la cuestión del robo, era preciso hacer muchas cosas en el *Arco Iris*. Además, ningún marido tenía necesidad de excusarse con su esposa para ir a aquella taberna, a tal punto se había convertido aquel sitio en la escena de rigurosos deberes públicos.

Qué decepción —y quizás también qué indignación— se manifestó al saber que Silas Marner, interrogado por el *squire* y el pastor, había respondido que no había conservado ningún recuerdo del buhonero, salvo que éste se había allegado a su choza, pero sin entrar en ella. Se había alejado inmediatamente, cuando Silas, entreabriendo la puerta, le dijo que no necesitaba nada. Tal había sido la declaración del tejedor.

Sin embargo, Silas se aferraba fuertemente a la idea de que el buhonero era el culpable probablemente por la única razón que ésta le presentaba la imagen clara de un sitio en que podía estar su oro, después de haber sido quitado del escondite: le parecía verlo ahora en la caja del buhonero.

Todas las gentes de la aldea hicieron notar con cierta irritación que todo el mundo, salvo una criatura ciega como Marner, hubiera visto al hombre merodeando por allí. En efecto, ¿cómo explicaría que hubiese dejado su caja de yesca en el foso, al lado de la choza, si no hubiese andado vagando por allí? Sin duda alguna, había hecho sus observaciones al ver a Marner en la puerta. Todo el mundo podía darse cuenta —con sólo verlo— que el tejedor era un avaro medio loco. Era sorprendente que el buhonero no lo hubiese asesinado. Muchas y muchas veces se había descubierto que la gente de esa especie, con aros en las orejas, eran asesinas. No hacía tanto tiempo que uno de esos individuos había sido juzgado, para que no hubiera gentes que lo recordaran.

Es cierto que habiendo entrado Godfrey Cass en la taberna del *Arco Iris* durante una de las frecuentes repeticiones que daba el señor Snell de su deposición, hizo poco caso del testimonio del tabernero. Declaró que él mismo le había confiado un cortaplumas al buhonero, y que éste le había parecido ser un tipo alegre, a quien le gustaba chancear. Según él, todo lo que decían de la mirada atravesada de aquel hombre no tenía sentido. Pero en la aldea aquellas palabras fueron consideradas como el habladero irreflexivo de un joven, pues no era sólo el señor Snell quien había encontrado que había algo de raro en la persona del buhonero. Por el contrario, había por lo menos media docena de testigos que estaban prontos para dirigirse al juez Malam para llevarle pruebas mucho más convincentes que ninguna de las que el tabernero podía dar. Era de desear que el señor Godfrey no fuera a Tarley a fin de echar agua fría sobre lo que el señor Snell había dicho delante del juez de esa aldea, e impedir de ese modo que el magistrado librara una orden de arresto. Se le sospechaba que tenía esta intención cuando se le vio partir por la tarde a caballo y en la dirección de Tarley.

Pero en aquel momento el interés que a Godfrey le inspiraba el robo se había desvanecido en presencia de su ansiedad creciente respecto de Dunstan y de *Relámpago*. No se iba a Tarley sino a Batterley, porque se sentía incapaz de permanecer más tiempo en esta incertidumbre a ese respecto. La posibilidad de que Dunstan le hubiese hecho la mala pasada de marcharse con *Relámpago*, para volver al cabo de un mes, después de haber perdido su precio en el juego o de haberlo disipado, de otra manera, era un temor que lo importunaba todavía más que la idea de un accidente desgraciado. Ahora que el baile de la señora Osgood había pasado; estaba furioso por haberle confiado su caballo a Dunstan. En lugar de tratar de calmar sus temores, los alentaba con esta idea supersticiosa e inherente a cada uno de nosotros de que cuando más se espera el mal resueltamente, menos probable es que suceda; así fue que cuando oyó que se acercaba un caballo al trote y vio que un sombrero sobrepasaba la cerca más allá del codo del sendero, le pareció que su conjuro había tenido éxito. Sin embargo, no bien estuvo el animal a la vista, su corazón se oprimió de nuevo, porque no era *Relámpago*. Y momentos después se dio cuenta de que el caballero no era Dunstan, sino Bryce, que detuvo su montura para conversar con él. La fisonomía de aquél no anunciaba nada de nuevo.


D. Thomson 07

—¿Qué trae, señor Godfrey, qué suerte la de su hermano, maese Dunsey, verdad?

—¿Qué queréis decir? —replicó vivamente Godfrey.

—¿Cómo? ¿No ha vuelto todavía a su casa? —dijo Bryce sorprendido.

—¿A casa?, no. ¿Qué ha sucedido? Hablad pronto. ¿Qué hizo de mi caballo?

—¡Ah!, bien pensaba yo que era siempre vuestro, bien que él dijera que se lo habíais cedido.

—¿Lo hizo rodar y lo mancó? —dijo Godfrey, rojo de cólera.

—Peor todavía —dijo Bryce—. Imaginaos que yo me había comprometido a comprarle el caballo por ciento veinte libras esterlinas, un precio loco, pero siempre me había gustado ese caballo. ¡Y no va y lo ensarta! ¡Precipitarse por encima de una cerca en que había postes de hierro, en la cima de su talud que tenía un foso delante! Hacía mucho tiempo que el caballo estaba muerto cuando se lo descubrió. Desde entonces Dunsey no ha vuelto a la casa, ¿verdad?

—¿A casa? No —replicó Godfrey—, y haría bien en no volver. ¡Qué imbécil soy, me lleve el diablo! Debiera de haber sabido que las cosas iban a concluir así.

—Pues bien, para deciros la verdad —continuó Bryce—, después de cerrado el trato se me ocurrió la idea de que vuestro hermano había podido montar el caballo para venderlo sin que vos lo supierais, porque no creí que fuera suyo. Yo sabía que maese Dunsey hacía de las suyas algunas veces. Pero ¿adónde puede haber ido? No se lo ha vuelto a ver en Batterley. No se debe haber hecho daño, porque no tenía más remedio que marcharse a pie.

—¿Daño? —dijo Godfrey amargamente—. Jamás se hará daño; ha nacido para hacerlo a los demás.

—¿Y vos lo habíais autorizado realmente para vender el caballo? —preguntó Bryce.

—Sí, quería deshacerme de él; siempre tuvo la boca algo dura para mí —respondió Godfrey, cuyo orgullo se sobresaltaba al pensar que Bryce adivinaba que la necesidad lo había obligado a separarse de su montura—. Iba a ver qué ha sido de *Relámpago*; me imaginaba que había sucedido alguna desgracia. Ahora voy a retroceder —agregó, haciendo volver la cabeza al caballo, con el deseo de poder librarse de Bryce, porque comprendía que la gran crisis de su vida, crisis tanto tiempo tornada, estaba próxima—. Venís a Raveloe, ¿verdad?

—No, ahora no —dijo Bryce—. Dirigiéndome a Flitton hice esta vuelta con la idea de que no sería malo que entrara de paso en vuestra casa, para deciros todo lo que sabía respecto al caballo. Supongo que maese Dunsey no ha querido mostrarse antes de que la mala noticia se hubiera disipado un poco. Quizá haya ido a hacerle una visita a la posada de las *Tres Coronas*, cerca de Whithbridge; sé que le gusta esa casa.

—Es muy posible —dijo Godfrey distraídamente.

Después, sacudiendo su preocupación, agregó, esforzándose por mostrarse indiferente:

—Hemos de oír hablar de él muy luego, podéis estar seguro.

—Bueno, éste es mi camino —dijo Bryce, sin que lo sorprendiera ver que Godfrey estaba bastante abatido—. Bueno, me despido haciendo votos porque pueda traeros mejores noticias otra vez.

Godfrey puso su caballo al paso. Se imaginaba la escena en que tendría que confesárselo todo a su padre, escena que comprendía era ya inevitable. Tenía que hacer la revelación relativa al dinero al otro día por la mañana. Suponiendo que ocultara el resto, como Dunstan no tardaría en volver, si éste se veía obligado a soportar la violencia de la cólera del padre, lo contaría todo por despecho, aunque no sacara de eso ningún provecho.

Existía todavía otro medio para conseguir el silencio de Dunstan y aplazar el mal día: Godfrey podía decirle a su padre que él mismo había gastado el dinero que le había entregado Fowler. Como nunca había cometido semejante falta, el asunto se disiparía después de un poco de tormenta. Pero era incapaz de resolverse a eso. Comprendía que al darle el dinero a Dunstan había cometido un abuso de confianza apenas menos culpable que el de haber gastado él mismo el dinero en su provecho… Sin embargo, había entre esos dos actos una diferencia que le hacía ver al segundo como tan odioso, que la idea de acusarse de él era insoportable.

—No pretendo ser irreprochable —se decía—; pero, sin embargo, no soy un pillo; por lo menos estoy resuelto a contenerme. Prefiero soportar las consecuencias de mi propia conducta y no hacer creer que soy el autor de un acto que nunca habría cometido. Jamás se me hubiera ocurrido gastar ese dinero para divertirme… sólo cedí a una tortura.

Durante todo el resto del día, Godfrey, salvo algunas fluctuaciones accidentales, permaneció firmemente resuelto a confesárselo todo al padre y aplazó la historia de la pérdida de *Relámpago* hasta el día siguiente, a fin de que sirviera de introducción a un asunto más importante. El viejo *squire* estaba acostumbrado a ver que Dunstan se ausentara con frecuencia de la casa; así es que no pensó que valiera la pena de hacer una

observación respecto de la desaparición de su hijo y de la del caballo.

Godfrey se repitió muchas veces que si dejaba escapar aquella ocasión favorable para confesarlo todo, jamás se le presentaría otra; y hasta la revelación podría producirse de una manera más odiosa que por la perversidad de Dunstan, si la otra se presentaba ella misma, como ya lo había amenazado con hacerlo Godfrey.

Entonces, para prepararse para la escena que iba a tener lugar, trató de imaginarla; resolvió mentalmente cómo pasaría la confesión de la debilidad en que había incurrido dándole el dinero a Dunstan al hecho que éste lo tenía tan agarrado, que había tenido que renunciar a hacérselo largar, como además tendría que proceder con su padre para que éste se preparara para algo muy grave antes de revelarle el hecho mismo.

El viejo *squire* era un hombre implacable; tomaba resoluciones durante una cólera violenta y no había medio de hacérselas abandonar, ni aun cuando esa cólera se hubiera disipado. Así son las lavas ardientes de los volcanes que se endurecen y forman una roca cuando se enfrían. Como muchos hombres inflexibles y violentos dejaba que el mal creciera al favor de su propia negligencia, hasta que se accediera con una fuerza que lo exasperaba. Entonces se volvía de un rigor feroz, y su dureza se tornaba inexorable. Ése era su sistema con los arrendatarios; los dejaba atrasarse en sus pagos, descuidar las cercas, reducir su material y su ganado, vender la paja y hacer todo lo que no debían; después, cuando estaba escaso de dinero a causa de su indulgencia, tomaba contra ellos las medidas más severas y se volvía sordo ante sus súplicas. Godfrey sabía todo eso y lo comprendía tanto más cuanto que había tenido el fastidio de ser testigo de los accesos de cólera brusca e implacable de su padre, accesos ante los cuales su irresolución habitual lo privaba de toda simpatía. Pero no criticaba la indulgencia culpable que los precedía; esa indulgencia le parecía bastante natural. Sin embargo, como Godfrey lo pensaba, apenas había una probabilidad de que el orgullo de su padre consideraba aquel casamiento desde un punto de vista que lo inclinara a mantenerlo secreto, antes que echar a su hijo y hacer hablar de la familia en el país, a diez leguas a la redonda.

Tal fue el aspecto bajo el cual Godfrey consiguió encarar las cosas hasta media noche. En seguida se durmió, pensando que ya había deliberado bastante consigo mismo. Pero, cuando despertó en la obscuridad de la mañana apacible, encontró que le era imposible recordar sus ideas de la noche precedente. Se hubiera dicho que estaban en exceso fatigadas y no podían volver a ser reanimadas para un nuevo trabajo. En lugar de argumentos en favor de una confesión, era incapaz ahora de representarse otra cosa que las deplorables consecuencias que aquella acarrearía. Entonces volvió el antiguo temor del deshonor —el antiguo horror de pensar en levantar una valla infranqueable entre él y Nancy—, su antigua inclinación a contar con las probabilidades capaces de serle favorables y evitarle una denuncia.

Porque, al fin y al cabo, ¿impediría con sus actos personales las esperanzas que da el ayer? Se había puesto a considerar la víspera su situación desde un falso punto de vista. Estaba furioso contra Dunstan, y no había pensado más que en una ruptura completa de su convenio mutuo.

Lo más cuerdo que podía hacer era tratar de atenuar la cólera de su padre contra Dunsey, y conservar lo más posible las cosas en su antiguo estado. Si Dunstan no volvía hasta dentro de algunos días —y Godfrey suponía que aquel pícaro tenía bastante dinero en el bolsillo como para poder prolongar su ausencia bastante tiempo—, todo podría disiparse.

IX

GODFREY SE levantó y se desayunó más temprano que de costumbre, pero se quedó en el pequeño salón artesonado hasta que sus hermanos menores acabaran de desayunarse y salieran. Esperaba a su padre, quien siempre hacía un paseo con el mayordomo antes de almorzar. Nadie comía a la misma hora por la mañana en la Casa Roja. Era siempre el último, a fin de dar a un apetito bastante débil mayores probabilidades, antes de ponerlo a prueba. Hacía casi dos horas que la mesa estaba guarnecida con platos suculentos esperando su llegada.

El *squire* Cass era un sexagenario alto y corpulento. Sus cejas crespas y la mirada bastante dura de sus ojos parecían no estar en armonía con su boca caída y su energía. Su persona tenía las trazas de una negligencia habitual y su traje estaba mal cuidado. Sin embargo, había en el aire del viejo *squire* algo que lo distinguía de los agricultores de la parroquia. Éstos eran quizá, bajo todo respecto, tan refinados como él, pero se habían arrastrado penosamente por el camino de la vida con la conciencia de estar en la vecindad de hombres que les eran superiores. Les faltaba, por lo tanto, esa posesión de sí mismos, esa autoridad de la palabra y ese empaque que distinguen al hombre que considera a las personas que les son inferiores como tan apartadas de sí, que no tienen que hacer con ellas menos que con el Gran Turco.

El *squire* había estado acostumbrado toda su vida, a recibir el homenaje de todas las gentes de la parroquia y a pensar que su familia, sus copas de plata y todo lo que le pertenecía era lo más antiguo y lo mejor; y como no frecuentaba nunca a la burguesía de esfera más elevada que la suya, su opinión no admitía cotejo.

Al entrar en la pieza, echó una mirada sobre su hijo y le dijo:

—¡Cómo es eso, señor! ¿Tampoco vos habéis almorzado?

No cambiaron ninguno de esos saludos amables de la mañana, no porque hubiera entre ellos alguna enemistad, sino porque la flor suave de la cortesía no prosperaba en residencias como la Casa Roja.

—Sí, mi padre, he almorzado; pero os esperaba para hablaros.

—¡Ah! Bueno —repuso el *squire*, dejándose caer pesadamente en su sillón y hablando con una voz pesada y catarrienta, lo que era considerado en Raveloe como una especie de privilegio de su rango, mientras cortaba un trozo del buey y se lo daba al perro corredor que había entrado con él—. Llamad para que me traigan mi cerveza, ¿queréis? Los negocios de vosotros los jóvenes son generalmente vuestros placeres personales; pero, si vosotros tenéis prisa por realizarlos, a los demás no les pasa otro tanto.

La vida del *squire* era tan ociosa como la de sus hijos; sin embargo, era una ficción mantenida por él y sus contemporáneos en Raveloe que la juventud era exclusivamente el período de la locura y que su vieja cordura era un espacio continuo de sufrimiento que el sarcasmo dulcificaba. Antes de volver a hablar, Godfrey esperó que la cerveza fuera servida y la puerta vuelta a cerrar. Durante este tiempo, rápido el perro corredor consumió tajadas del buey en cantidad suficiente como para formar la comida de un pobre en día de fiesta.

—Ha ocurrido un maldito accidente con *Relámpago* —comenzó diciendo—; sucedió anteayer.



—¡Cómo! ¿Se ha mancado? —dijo el *squire*, después de beber un trago de cerveza—. Pensaba que sabíais montar mejor, señor. Jamás he estropeado un caballo en mi vida. Si lo hubiese hecho, en balde hubiera pedido otro, porque mi padre no estaba tan dispuesto para desatar los cordones de su bolsa como otros padres que yo conozco. Pero es preciso que estos cambien de tono, es imprescindible. A causa de las hipotecas y de los pagos retrasados, estoy tan falto de dinero como un mendigo. Y ese tonto de Kimble dice que los diarios hablan de pago. Si eso sucediera, el país no podría sostenerse: los precios se vienen abajo como las pesas de un asador, y jamás conseguiré que se me paguen los atrasos, ni aunque haga vender todo lo que esos individuos poseen. Y ese maldito Fowler… no quiero tolerar más tiempo su morosidad; le he dicho a Winthrop que vaya hoy mismo a verlo a Cosc. Ese bribón mentiroso me prometió entregarme sin falta el mes pasado cien libras esterlinas. Se aprovecha de que ocupa una granja apartada y piensa que lo voy a perder de vista.

El *squire* acabó de despachar su discurso tosiendo e interrumpiéndose; pero, sin embargo, sin hacer pausas bastante largas que pudiesen servirle de pretexto a Godfrey para volver a hablar. Este vio que su padre tenía la intención de eludir todo pedido pecuniario motivado por la desgracia ocurrida a *Relámpago*. Además adivinó que el tono de insistencia empleado por el *squire* al hablar del poco dinero de que disponía y de los deudores morosos debía de producir en su espíritu la disposición menos favorable para escuchar las confesiones de su hijo. Sin embargo, era preciso que prosiguiera ahora que había comenzado.

—Es algo más grave; el caballo se ensartó en un poste y se mató —dijo en seguida que su padre se detuvo y comenzó a comer—. Pero no tenía la intención de pediros que me comprarais otro; sólo pensaba en que no me sería posible reembolsaros con el precio de *Relámpago* como me proponía. Dunsey lo llevó a una cacería para venderlo, y después de haber cerrado el trato con Bryce por ciento veinte libras esterlinas, siguió la traílla y dio algunos saltos insensatos, uno de los cuales despachó al caballo. Sin esa circunstancia, os hubiera entregado cien libras esterlinas esta mañana.

El *squire* había dejado el cuchillo y el tenedor y miraba a su hijo fijamente y con estupefacción. Su espíritu no era bastante sutil como para adivinar qué causa había podido causar aquella extraña inversión de las relaciones entre el padre y el hijo que importaba aquella intención de Godfrey de darle cien libras esterlinas.

—La verdad es, mi padre… lo siento mucho… que hice muy mal. Fowler pagó como dijo las cien libras esterlinas. Me las entregó cuando fui allá, el mes pasado. Pero Dunsey me atormentó tanto para que le diera ese dinero que se lo facilité porque esperaba entregároslo en seguida…

El *squire*, que se había puesto rojo de cólera antes de que su hijo hubiese acabado de hablar, consiguió más que expresar con dificultades:

—¿Vos le dejasteis el dinero a Dunsey, señor? ¿Y desde cuándo sois tan íntimo con vuestro hermano que os veáis obligado a asociaros con él para disponer de mi dinero? Estáis en camino de volveros un pícaro. Os digo que no toleraré esto. Echaré a la calle toda vuestra secuela y me volveré a casar. Quisiera, señor, que os acordarais de que mi propiedad no es un bien inalienable. Desde la época de mis bisabuelos, los Cass pueden disponer de sus tierras como mejor les parece. No olvidéis eso, señor. ¿Le entregasteis el dinero a Dunsey? ¿Y por qué se lo entregasteis? Tiene que haber en esto una mentira.

—No hay ninguna mentira, mi padre —prosiguió Godfrey—. Yo no hubiera gastado el dinero para mí; pero Dunsey me presionó tanto que hice la tontería de entregárselo. Pero yo tenía la intención de entregároslo, que él me lo devolviese o no. Eso es todo. Nunca pensé en apropiarme ese dinero. Jamás me habéis sorprendido haciéndole una mala partida a mi padre.

—¿Dónde está Dunsey, entonces? Por qué os estáis aquí hablando. Id a buscar a Dunsey, os digo, y que explique por qué necesitó ese dinero y qué hizo de él. Se arrepentirá. Lo arrojaré a la calle. He dicho que quería hacerlo y lo haré. No me volverá a faltar. Id a buscarle.

—Dunsey no ha vuelto, mi padre.

—¿El qué? ¿Se ha roto el pescuezo entonces? —dijo el *squire* mostrándose algo descontento con la idea de que, si así era, no podría poner en práctica sus amenazas.

—No, no se ha hecho daño, creo, porque el caballo fue encontrado muerto, y Dunsey debió poder marcharse a pie. Supongo que pronto lo volveremos a ver. No sé dónde está.

—¿Y por qué tuvisteis que darle mi dinero? Respondedme a esto —continuó el padre, atacando de nuevo a Godfrey, puesto que no tenía a Dunsey a su alcance.

—La verdad, mi padre, es que no sé —respondió Godfrey con vacilación.

Era aquél un débil subterfugio, pero a Godfrey no le gustaba mentir, y como sabía que ninguna duplicidad puede prosperar mucho tiempo sin la ayuda de palabras falsas, no tenía a su disposición ningún

efugio imaginado de antemano.

—¿Que no lo sabéis? Yo voy a deciros por qué ha sido, señor. Habéis hecho de la vuestra, y para eso comprasteis su silencio —dijo el *squire* con una penetración brusca.

Godfrey se estremeció. Sintió que su corazón palpitaba con violencia al ver que su padre casi había adivinado. Esta alarma repentina le impulsó a hacer un paso más, una impulsión muy ligera basta para eso cuando se está en un plano inclinado.

—Pues bien, sí, mi padre —prosiguió; y trataba de hablar en tono fácil y despreocupado—; había un pequeño asunto entre Dunsey y yo; no tiene ninguna importancia más que para él y para mí. No vale la pena de mezclarse en las locuras de los jóvenes… eso no os hubiera perjudicado en nada, mi padre, y yo no hubiese tenido la mala suerte de perder a *Relámpago*. Hoy os hubiera entregado el dinero.

—¡Locuras! ¡Bah! Sería tiempo que acabaran las vuestras. Quisiera convenceros, señor, de que es preciso realmente ponerles término —dijo el *squire* frunciendo las cejas y lanzándole a su hijo una mirada irritada —. Vuestras proezas no son tales que me permiten conseguir dinero. Mirad, mi abuelo tenía sus caballerizas llenas de caballos; su mesa era también una buena mesa —y en tiempos peores que el nuestro—, a lo que yo sé al menos. Yo podría hacer otro tanto si no tuviera cuatro ganapanes que se me prenden como sanguijuelas. Yo he sido un padre demasiado bueno para con todos vosotros, eso es lo que hay. Pero en adelante voy a tener las riendas cortas.

Godfrey permaneció silencioso. No es probable que fuera muy penetrante en sus juicios; sin embargo, siempre había comprendido que la indulgencia de su padre no era bondad, y había suspirado vagamente por alguna disciplina que dominara su debilidad vagabunda y secundar sus mejores intenciones. El *squire* comió el pan y la carne rápidamente, bebió un buen sorbo de cerveza, y luego, volviendo la espalda a la mesa, prosiguió:

—Será tanto peor para vos, sabedlo; más os valiera que tratarais de ayudarme y conservar lo que tenemos.

—Pues bien, mi padre, a menudo me he ofrecido para tomar la gestión de los negocios, pero vos sabéis que siempre interpretasteis mal esto, y que parecisteis creer que deseaba suplantaros.

—No me acuerdo de vuestros ofrecimientos ni de haberlos interpretado mal —dijo el *squire*, cuyos recuerdos consistían en ciertas impresiones vivas que los detalles no habían modificado—; lo que yo sé es que en cierta época pareció que pensabais en casaros, y yo no traté de cerraros el camino como algunos padres lo habrían hecho. No me agradaría más veros casar con la hija de Lammeter que con cualquier otra. Supongo que si os hubiera dicho no, hubierais persistido en vuestra intención; a falta de contradicción habéis cambiado de parecer. Sois como una veleta; heredasteis de vuestra pobre madre. Jamás tuvo carácter. Es verdad que eso no le hace falta a una mujer si su marido es un hombre como debe ser, pero esa cualidad le sería muy necesaria a la vuestra, porque apenas tenéis la voluntad necesaria para hacer caminar a las dos piernas en la misma dirección. Esa joven no ha dicho definitivamente que no os aceptaba, ¿verdad?

—No —dijo Godfrey, sintiendo que un vivo sonrojo le subía a la cara y sintiéndose molesto—; pero no creo que guste de mí.

—¡Qué no creéis! ¿Por qué no habéis tenido el valor de preguntárselo? ¿Siempre deseáis vos casaros con ella? Ésta es la cuestión.

—No deseo casarme con otra —respondió Godfrey, de un modo evasivo.

—Pues bien, entonces, dejadme hacer el pedido en vuestro lugar, si no tenéis valor para hacerlo vos mismo, y asunto concluido. No es probable que Lammeter vea con malos ojos que su hija se case en mi familia, me parece. En cuanto a la linda muchacha, no ha querido aceptar a su primo y no veo que otro pretendiente hubiera podido soplaros la dama.

—Preferiría dejar las cosas tranquilas, si así os place, mi padre —prosiguió Godfrey asustado—. Creo que está un poco enojada conmigo en este momento y desearía hablarle yo mismo. De estas cosas es necesario ocuparse personalmente.

—Pues entonces hablad y ocuparos, y tratad de cambiar de conducta. Eso es lo que necesita hacer un hombre cuando piensa en casarse.

—No veo cómo me sería posible hacerlo ahora, mi padre. No querréis establecerme en una de vuestras granjas, supongo, y no creo que ella consintiera en venir a vivir en esta casa junto con todos mis hermanos. Aquí se lleva una vida muy distinta de aquélla a que está acostumbrada.

—¿Que no consentiría en venir a vivir en esta casa? No me digáis eso. Preguntádselo y veremos —repuso el *squire* con una risa breve e irónica.

—Preferiría dejar las cosas quietas por el momento, mi padre —dijo Godfrey—. Espero que no trataréis

de precipitar las cosas diciendo cosa alguna.

—Haré lo que me plazca —replicó el *squire*—, y os haré ver que yo soy quien manda; de otro modo podéis marcharos de esta casa e ir a buscar morada en otra parte. Id a ver a Winthrop y decidle que no vaya a lo de Cass y que me espere… ordenad que me ensillen mi caballo. ¡Ah!, esperad; tratad de vender la vieja jaca de Dunsey y de entregarme ese dinero; ¿habéis oído? Ya no mantendrá más caballos a mi costa. Y si sabéis dónde se ha metido —vos lo sabéis sin duda—, podéis decirle que no se dé el trabajo de volver a la casa. Que se haga mozo de cuadra y gane con qué vivir. Ya no me pesará más encima.

—No sé, padre, dónde está, y si lo supiera no me correspondería a mí decirle que no vuelva más —dijo Godfrey dirigiéndose hacia la puerta.

—Que el diablo os confunda, señor; no os quedéis ahí perdiendo tiempo e id a decir que me ensillen mi caballo —prosiguió el *squire*, tomando una pipa.

Godfrey salió, dándose apenas cuenta si estaba más tranquilo por haber terminado la entrevista sin haber modificado su posición, o más inquieto al pensar que se había enredado aún más en los subterfugios y los artificios. Lo que había pasado con motivo del pedido de la mano de Nancy le había causado al joven una mera alarma: el temor de que el *squire* fuera a deslizarle al señor Lammeter, de sobremesa, algunas palabras que fueran capaces de ponerlo a él, Godfrey, en la necesidad absoluta de renunciar a Nancy en el momento mismo que parecía estar a su alcance. Recurrió entonces a su refugio ordinario, a la esperanza de algún golpe imprevisto de la fortuna, de alguna coyuntura favorable que le ahorraría consecuencias penosas y hasta perjudicaría su falta de sinceridad, convirtiéndola en prudencia.

En lo que concierne a contar con algún tiro de dados de la fortuna, apenas puede decirse que Godfrey fuera de la vieja escuela. La casualidad favorable es el Dios de todos los hombres que siguen sus propias impulsiones, en lugar de obedecer una ley en la cual no creen. Si un hombre distinguido de nuestra época consigue una posición que tiene vergüenza de hacer conocer, su espíritu buscará todas las salidas imaginables capaces de librarlo de los resultados que esa posición deja prever. Si gasta más de lo que tiene, si evita el trabajo honesto y resuelto que proporciona su salario, en seguida se pone a soñar en la posibilidad de encontrar un bienhechor, un tonto a quien sabrá halagar, a fin de poder usar su influencia en su favor, en imaginarse un estado de espíritu posible en alguna persona probable que todavía no ha dado señales de aparecer. Si descuida las obligaciones de su empleo, echa inevitablemente su ancla al azar, con la esperanza de que aquello que no ha hecho no tendrá la importancia supuesta. Si traiciona la confianza de un amigo, adora esa misma complejidad sutil que llama al azar, que le da esperanza de que ese amigo no lo sabrá jamás. Si abandona un honrado oficio para buscar las distinciones de una profesión a la que nunca ha sido llamado por la naturaleza, su religión es infaliblemente el culto de una casualidad favorable, en la que cree como en un poderoso, creador del éxito. El mal principio rechazado por esta religión es el orden natural de la sucesión de las cosas, de acuerdo con el cual las semillas producen una cosecha de su especie.

X

EL JUEZ Malam era considerado, naturalmente, en Tarley y en Raveloe, como un personaje de vasta inteligencia, visto que era capaz de sacar sin pruebas conclusiones mucho más profundas que las que se podían esperar de sus vecinos que no eran magistrados.

No era posible que semejante hombre descuidara el indicio de la caja de yesca.

Así, pues, se dio comienzo a una pesquisa que tenía por objeto un buhonero: nombre desconocido, cabellos negros y crespos, color moreno de un extranjero, mercader de cuchillería y bisutería que llevaba en un cajoncito, y grandes aros en las orejas.

Pero, ya sea que las diligencias de las pesquisas se hicieron con demasiada lentitud, ya sea que aquella filiación conviniera a tan grande número de buhoneros que no fuera posible hacer una elección entre ellos, lo cierto es que transcurrieron las semanas y no se obtuvo más resultado concerniente al robo, que el cese gradual de la agitación que había causado en Raveloe.

La ausencia de Dunstan Cass fue apenas objeto de una observación: ya antes, a causa de un disgusto con su padre, se había marchado, quién sabe a dónde. Al cabo de seis semanas había vuelto a sus antiguos cuarteles sin encontrar oposición, y tan fanfarrón como antes. Su propia familia, que esperaba aquel desenlace con la única diferencia que esta vez el *squire* estaba resuelto a prohibirle la vuelta a los mencionados cuarteles, no aludía nunca a su ausencia, y, cuando su tío Kimble y el señor Osgood la notaron, el hecho de que había matado a *Relámpago* y cometido ofensa contra su padre, bastó para impedir que causara sorpresa.

Relacionar el hecho de la desaparición de Dunsey con el robo ocurrido el mismo día era cosa que estaba muy lejos del curso ordinario de los pensamientos de todos, aún de los de Godfrey, que tenía mejores razones que nadie para saber de qué cosas era capaz su hermano. No recordaba que Dunsey y él hubieran hablado nunca del tejedor desde hacía doce años, época de su infancia, en que se divertían burlándose de él.

Además, su imaginación encontraba siempre una coartada para Dunstan; se lo imaginaba siempre en algún escondrijo en armonía con los gustos que le conocía, y hacia el cual debía haberse dirigido después de haber abandonado a *Relámpago*. Lo veía viviendo a expensas de las relaciones fortuitas y pensando en volver a la casa para divertirse en mortificar a su hermano mayor como antes.

Aun cuando una persona de Raveloe hubiera sido capaz de relacionar los dos hechos antedichos, dudo que una combinación tan injuriosa para la honorabilidad hereditaria que tenía un monumento mural en la iglesia y copas de plata tan venerables, no hubiera permanecido secreta a causa de su tendencia malsana. Pero los *puddings* de Navidad, la carne de cerdo cocida y especiada y la abundancia de licores espirituosos precipitan la originalidad del espíritu en el camino de la pesadilla y son grandes preservativos contra la peligrosa espontaneidad del espíritu.

Cuando se habló del robo en la taberna del *Arco Iris* y fuera de allí, en la buena sociedad la balanza siguió oscilando entre la explicación racional basada en la caja de yesca y en la teoría de un misterio impenetrable que ponía las pesquisas en ridículo. Los partidarios de la creencia en la caja de yesca y de un buhonero consideraban a sus adversarios como una colección de gentes crédulas de cerebro desequilibrado que teniendo la vista perturbada, se imaginaban que todos veían como ellos; y los que estaban por lo inexplicable, se limitaban a dar a entender que sus antagonistas eran unos volátiles dispuestos a cantar antes de encontrar grano; verdaderas espumaderas en cuanto a capacidad y cuya clarividencia consistía en suponer que no había nada tras de la puerta de una granja porque no podían ver a través de ellas.

Por lo tanto, bien que esta controversia no sirviera para poner en claro el robo, descubrían ciertas opiniones verdaderas o importantes, pero que no tenían nada que ver con el asunto.

Entretanto, mientras que la pérdida que así había sufrido servía para activar la débil corriente de la conversación de Raveloe, al pobre Silas lo consumía la desesperación que le causaba aquella privación de que sus vecinos hablaban a sus anchas. Cualquiera que lo hubiese observado antes de la desaparición del oro, hubiera podido figurarse que un ser tan desgastado y marchito tendría apenas la fuerza de soportar alguna magulladura o que no sería capaz de sufrir algún debilitamiento sin sucumbir en seguida.

En realidad, su vida había sido una vida ardiente, ocupada por un fin inmediato que lo separaba de la inmensidad desconocida y triste; su vida había sido tenaz y, bien que el objeto alrededor del cual las fibras de su vida se habían entrelazado, fuese una cosa aislada e inerte, ese objeto daba satisfacción a la necesidad de Marner de tener una afección cualquiera. Pero ahora la separación protectora estaba destruida, suprimido el sostén. Los pensamientos de Silas no podían seguir girando en el antiguo círculo. Se encontraba desorientado por un vacío parecido al que la hormiga laboriosa encuentra cuando se ha desmoronado la tierra en el sendero que conduce a su nido. El telar estaba allí, y el tejido y el dibujo creciente de la tela; pero el brillante tesoro del escondite ya no estaba bajo sus pies; la perspectiva de palparlo y de contarlo no existía ya; la noche no tenía ya sus visiones de delicias para calmar los deseos ardientes de aquella pobre alma. La idea del dinero que ganaría con el trabajo del momento no le proporcionaba ninguna satisfacción, porque aquella imagen mezquina no hacía más que recordarle de nuevo su infortunio; y esas esperanzas habían sido aplastadas con demasiada violencia por el brusco golpe para que su imaginación se detuviera en la idea de ver acumularse su nuevo tesoro con aquel pequeño comienzo.

Aquel vacío estaba colmado por su dolor. Mientras estaba ocupado en tejer, gemía con frecuencia, muy quedo, como un alma en pena: era seña de que su pensamiento había vuelto al abismo abrupto, a las horas inertes de la noche. Y durante esas horas, sentado junto a la soledad de su triste fuego, apoyaba los codos en las rodillas, se apretaba la cabeza entre las manos, y gemía aún más despacio, como si tratara de no ser oído.

Sin embargo, no estaba tan completamente abandonado en su desgracia. La aversión que había inspirado siempre a los vecinos se había disipado en parte, gracias al nuevo aspecto en que su infortunio lo había presentado. En lugar de un hombre dotado con más habilidades de las que las gentes honestas pueden poseer, y, lo que es más grave, nada dispuesto a usarlas como buen vecino, ahora era evidente que Silas no tenía siquiera bastante habilidad para conservar lo que le pertenecía.

Se hablaba generalmente de él como de una pobre criatura bien quebrantada, y ese alejamiento para con su prójimo, que se había atribuido en un principio a su mala voluntad y a la peor de las relaciones, era actualmente considerado como una simple locura.

Esa vuelta a mejores sentimientos se manifestaba de distintas maneras.

El aire estaba impregnado con el olor de la cocina de Navidad, y era la estación en que las sobras del cerdo y de la morcilla sugieren la caridad a las familias acomodadas. Las desgracias que le habían sucedido a Silas lo colocaban en primera fila en los espíritus de las dueñas de casas tales como la señora Osgood. También el señor Crackenthorp, al mismo tiempo que advertía a Silas que probablemente su dinero le había sido quitado porque pensaba demasiado en él y no iba nunca a la iglesia, reforzaba su doctrina regalándole unos pies de cerdo; medio excelente de disipar los prejuicios mal fundados que existen sobre la reputación del clero. Los vecinos que sólo podían dar consuelos, se mostraban inclinados no sólo a saludar a Silas y discutir con bastante detención su infortunio cuando lo encontraban en la aldea, sino que iban también a verlo en su choza y le hacían repetir todos los detalles del robo en el sitio en que había sido cometido. Después trataban de alentarlo, diciéndole: «Qué tal, maese Marner, no sois más desgraciado que los otros pobres, al fin y al cabo; y si llegarais a quedar imposibilitado, la parroquia os daría socorro».

Supongo que una de las razones porque somos incapaces de consolar al prójimo con palabras, es que nuestras intenciones se corrompen a pesar nuestro antes de pasar por nuestros labios. Podemos mandar morcillas y patas de cerdo sin darles el sabor de nuestro egoísmo; pero el lenguaje es una corriente que casi siempre tiene el gusto del cauce impuro porque corre. Había una porción razonable de bondad en el corazón de las gentes de Raveloe, pero ejercían esa bondad con la franqueza torpe de la embriaguez, empleando las formas en que menos se revelan la amabilidad y el disimulo.

El señor Macey, por ejemplo, fue una noche expresamente para decirle a Silas que los acontecimientos recientes le habían dado la ventaja de que se lo considerara con más fervor un hombre cuya opinión no se había formado a la ligera. Con este fin, así que hubo unido sus pulgares, comenzó la conversación diciendo:

—¡Vamos! Maese Marner, vamos, no tenéis para qué permanecer ahí sentado y gimiendo. Es mejor para vos que hayáis perdido vuestro dinero que el que lo hubieseis conservado valiéndoos de viles medios. Yo pensé en un principio, cuando vinisteis acá, que no erais mejor de lo preciso. Erais mucho más joven de lo

que sois ahora; pero siempre habéis sido una criatura pálida y azorada, pareciéndoos en cierto modo a un ternero de cabeza blanca, si me es lícito expresarme así. Sin embargo, uno puede equivocarse. No es solamente el demonio el que ha hecho todos los seres de aspecto raro. Quiero referirme a los sapos y otras alimañas parecidas, porque con frecuencia son inofensivas; y hasta son útiles para destruir los insectos. Algo parecido acontece con vos, al menos por lo que puedo apreciar, bien que lo que concierne a vuestro conocimiento de la plantas y las drogas apropiadas para restablecer la respiración, si las habéis traído de un país apartado, hubierais podido mostraros un poco más generoso. Y si esos conocimientos habían sido adquiridos donde no se debía hacerlo, nada os impedía que compensarais esto yendo a la iglesia regularmente. En efecto, los niños que la bruja de Tarley hechizaba, los vi bautizar más de una vez y recibir el agua bendita tan bien como los demás. Y así tiene que ser, considerando que si el demonio desea hacer un poco de bien para poder descansar, si me es lícito expresarme así, ¿quién tiene que poner reparos a esto? Tal es mi opinión. Hace cuarenta años que soy chantre de esta parroquia, y yo sé que cuando el pastor y yo denunciamos la cólera celeste el miércoles de ceniza, no se pronuncia ningún anatema contra aquellos que desean ser curados sin médico, diga lo que quiera el doctor Kimble. Por consiguiente, maese Marner, como os lo decía hace un momento, las cosas tienen tantas vueltas, que os ocurren, como acaba de sucederme, que sois arrastrado hasta el último capítulo del libro de oraciones antes de volver al asunto; mi opinión es que no debéis desalentaros. En cuanto a imaginarse que sois un personaje maligno y que hay más ciencia en vuestra cabeza de la que podríais revelar, no soy absolutamente de ese parecer, y eso es lo que les repito a los vecinos. Vosotros pretendéis —les digo— que maese Marner habría forjado un cuento; pues bien, eso es absurdo, en verdad. Se requeriría realmente un hombre inteligente para inventar una historia como ésa; y, además, la noche que vino a la taberna parecía más asustado que una liebre.

Durante este discurso sin dilación, Silas había permanecido inmóvil en su primera actitud, apoyando los codos en las rodillas y oprimiéndose la cabeza entre las manos. El señor Macey se detuvo, no dudando que había sido escuchado. Esperaba alguna apreciación como respuesta; pero Marner permaneció silencioso. Tenía la impresión de que el anciano quería serle agradable, y tenía a su respecto intenciones de buen vecino; desgraciadamente aquella bondad caía sobre Silas como los rayos del sol sobre el hombre miserable; sintiendo que estaba muy lejos de él, no tenía ánimo para gozarla.

—Vamos, maese Marner, ¿no tenéis qué responder a esto? —dijo al fin el señor Macey con un tono lentamente impasible.

—¡Ah! —respondió Marner con lentitud, sacudiendo la cabeza entre las manos—, os doy las gracias, os doy las gracias con todo corazón.

—Sí, sí, ciertamente, estaba seguro de que me daríais las gracias —dijo el señor Macey—, y soy de opinión que… A propósito, ¿tenéis ropa que vestir los domingos?

—No —dijo Marner.

—Eso pensaba —dijo el señor Macey—. Ahora dejadme aconsejaros que os proporcione un traje. Tookey es un hombre diablo, pero se ha hecho cargo de mi sastrería, y lo he habilitado con algún dinero. Os hará un traje completo, barato y fiado. Entonces podréis venir a la iglesia y ser algo sociable con vuestros vecinos. ¡Cómo! ¿No me habéis oído decir amén desde vuestra llegada a este pueblo? Os recomiendo que no perdáis tiempo, porque será algo deplorable cuando Tookey me reemplace por completo. Puede muy bien que pasado otro invierno no tenga más fuerzas para estar de pie junto al órgano.

Dicho esto, el señor Macey hizo una pausa, esperando quizás algún signo de emoción por parte de su interlocutor. Viendo que Marner no decía nada, prosiguió:

—Y en cuanto al dinero para el traje completo, debéis ganar con vuestro telar una libra esterlina por semana, maese Marner, y todavía sois joven, me parece, aunque parezcáis muy agobiado. Pero no debíais tener veinticinco años cuando vinisteis a estableceros aquí, ¿verdad?

Silas se estremeció ligeramente cuando el señor Macey tomó aquel tono de interrogación, y respondió con suavidad:

—No lo sé, no lo podría decir con exactitud; ¡hace de eso tanto tiempo!

Después de recibir semejante respuesta, no es de extrañar que el señor Macey hiciera notar más tarde, en la velada del *Arco Iris*, que Marner tenía la cabeza perdida, y que no sabía probablemente cuándo era domingo, lo que demostraba que era más pagano que muchos perros.

Además del señor Macey, otra persona que consolaba a Silas fue a verlo con el corazón lleno de los mismos pensamientos. Era la señora Winthrop, la mujer del carretero.

Los habitantes de Raveloe no iban a los oficios con regularidad escrupulosa. Quizá hubiera sido difícil encontrar a alguien en la parroquia que no pensara que los fieles que frecuentaban la iglesia todos los domingos del calendario, manifestaban un deseo ávido de estar bien con el Cielo, y de obtener

indebidamente una ventaja sobre sus vecinos, un deseo de ser mejores que el común de los mortales, implicando este una cierta censura para las gentes que, habiendo tenido como ellos padrinos y madrinas, poseían derecho igual al servicio fúnebre. Al mismo tiempo era cosa entendida que todos, excepto los sirvientes y los jóvenes, debían recibir el sacramento de la eucaristía en una de las grandes fiestas. El propio *squire* Cass comulgaba en Navidad; mientras que los que eran considerados buenos cristianos, iban a la iglesia más a menudo, pero con moderación, sin embargo.

La señora Winthrop se contaba entre estas últimas. Era de todo punto una mujer concienzuda y escrupulosa. Ponía tal ardor en cumplir sus deberes, que la vida parecía no presentárselos con tanta frecuencia, cuando no se levantaba a las cuatro y media de la mañana. Eso disminuía, es cierto, las tareas de las horas que seguían, y este inconveniente representaba para ella un problema que constantemente trataba de resolver.

Sin embargo, no tenía el carácter atrabiliario que se supone va necesariamente asociado con tales costumbres. Era una mujer muy suave y bondadosa que buscaba por temperamento todos los elementos más tristes y más serios de la vida para nutrir su espíritu, era la persona en quien se pensaba en Raveloe cada vez que había un enfermo o un muerto en una familia, cuando había que aplicar sanguijuelas y que no se podía conseguir una enfermera.

Mujer servicial, de buen semblante, cutis fresco, tenía los labios siempre ligeramente apretados como si creyera estar en el cuarto de un enfermo en presencia del médico o del pastor. Pero no lloriqueaba nunca; nadie la había visto nunca derramar lágrimas. No se observaba en ella más que una gravedad y una disposición a menear la cabeza y a suspirar de un modo casi imperceptible, como una plañidera que no es parienta del difunto. Parecía sorprendente que Ben Winthrop, que gustaba del jarro de cerveza y de decir chistes, viviera tan de acuerdo con Dolly; pero es que ella aceptaba las ocurrencias y la jovialidad de su marido con tanta paciencia como las demás cosas. Se decía que los hombres son siempre así, hágase lo que se haga, y ante sus ojos las personas del sexo fuerte eran criaturas que al cielo le había placido hacerlas naturalmente fastidiosas, como los gansos y los pavos.

Aquella mujer buena y caritativa no podía dejar de sentirse fuertemente atraída por Silas Marner, ahora que lo veía bajo un aspecto de una persona que sufre. Un domingo por la tarde tomó a su pequeño Aarón consigo y se dirigió a casa de Silas. Llevaba en la mano algunos bizcochos, hechos de pasta liviana y que eran muy estimados en Raveloe.

Aarón, un niño de siete años, cuyas mejillas semejaban manzanas y cuyo cuello limpio y almidonado parecía ser el plato que contenía aquellas frutas, tuvo que recurrir a toda audacia de su curiosidad para vencer el temor de que el tejedor de ojos saltones no le fuera a dar algún daño físico. Su aprensión creció mucho cuando, al llegar a las canteras, él y su madre oyeron el ruido misterioso del telar.

—¡Ah! ¡Era como yo lo pensaba! —dijo tristemente la señora de Winthrop.

Tuvieron que golpear con fuerza antes de que Silas los oyera; sin embargo, cuando se asomó a la puerta no demostró ninguna impaciencia como hubiera hecho antes al recibir una visita que no era ni esperada ni solicitada. Antes su corazón era como un cofrecillo cerrado con llave y que contenía un tesoro; pero ahora el cofrecillo estaba vacío, y la cerradura rota. Abandonado en las tinieblas y buscando en ellas sus caminos a tientas, falto por completo de su apoyo, Silas tenía inevitablemente el sentimiento —sentimiento triste, en verdad, y que casi rayaba en la desesperación— de que si algún socorro le llegaba no podía ser sino de afuera. Así es que sentía una ligera emoción de esperanza a la vista de sus semejantes. Tenía una vaga idea de que debía contar con la benevolencia de ellos.

Abrió la puerta enteramente para dejar pasar a Dolly; sin embargo, no le devolvió su saludo más que haciendo adelantar la silla algunas pulgadas para indicarle que podía sentarse. Así que Dolly se sentó, quitó la servilleta que cubría los bizcochos y dijo con la mayor gravedad:

—Maese Marner, ayer hice cocer en el horno estos bizcochos, y están mejores que de costumbre. Venía a pediros que aceptéis algunos si lo tenéis a bien. A mí no me agradan estas cosas, porque lo que prefiero de un extremo del año al otro es un pedazo de pan; pero los hombres tienen un estómago tan caprichoso que necesitan cambiar; sí, necesitan, lo sé; que Dios los ayude.

Dolly suspiró suavemente ofreciéndole los bizcochos a Silas. Éste le dio las gracias con bondad y miró el presente muy cerca, distraídamente, porque estaba acostumbrado a examinar así todo lo que tomaba en las manos. Entretanto, los ojos redondos, brillantes y sorprendidos del pequeño Aarón estaban fijos en él; el niño se había parapetado tras de la silla de su madre y desde allí lanzaba sus miradas furtivas.

—Tienen encima impresas unas letras —dijo Dolly—. Yo no sé leerlas y nadie, ni aun el señor Macey sabe exactamente lo que quieren decir; pero tienen un buen significado, puesto que son las mismas que se ven en el tapiz del púlpito, en la iglesia. ¿Qué letras son, Aarón, hijo mío?

Aarón se escondió completamente detrás de su trinchera.

—¡Oh, vamos, no seas malo! —le dijo su madre con suavidad—. Bueno, sean cuales fueran esas letras, tienen un buen significado. Ben dice que es una marca que se ha usado siempre en su familia desde cuando era niño. Su madre tenía la costumbre de ponerla en los bizcochos, y yo también siempre la he puesto; porque si hay algún bien en ello nos hace falta en el mundo.

—Es I. H. S. (*In hoc salus*) —dijo Silas.



Ante aquella prueba de saber, Aarón lanzó una nueva mirada furtiva por detrás de la silla.

—Sí, la verdad es que las habéis podido leer fácilmente —dijo Dolly—. Ben me la ha leído muchas veces, pero se me van de la cabeza. Es tanto más sensible cuanto que son buenas letras; de otro modo no estarían en la iglesia. Por eso las pongo en todos los panes y en todos los bizcochos, bien que a veces se borran porque la masa crece, porque, como decía, si podemos conseguir algún bien lo necesitamos en este mundo, os lo aseguro. Espero que os lo proporcionarán, maese Marner. Es con esa intención que os he traído los bizcochos, y ya veis que las letras han salido mejor que de costumbre.

Silas era tan incapaz de interpretar las letras como Dolly; sin embargo, no era posible, al oír las dulces palabras de la señora Winthrop, equivocarse sobre el deseo que tenía de hacer un bien. Respondió, pues, con más sentimiento que antes:

—Gracias, gracias de todo corazón.

Sin embargo, puso a un lado los bizcochos y se sentó distraídamente triste e inconsciente del bien que pudieran hacerle los bizcochos, las letras y hasta la bondad de Dolly.

—¡Ah! Si hay un bien en algo, lo necesitamos —repitió Dolly, que no abandonaba fácilmente una frase útil.

Y continuó hablando mientras miraba a Silas con compasión:

—¿Pero no oísteis las campanas de la iglesia esta mañana, maese Marner? ¿Conque ignorabais que hoy es domingo? Viviendo aquí tan solitario os olvidáis del día que es, me parece; además, con el ruido del telar, no oís las campanas, que, por otra parte, ahora sofoca el aire frío y húmedo que reina.

—Sí, sí, las he oído —respondió Silas, para quien el sonido de las campanas era un simple incidente que no tenía ninguna relación con la santidad del día. No había campanas en el Patio de la Linterna.

—¡Dios mío! —dijo Dolly, deteniéndose antes de seguir hablando—. Es lástima que trabajéis el domingo y que no cuidéis vuestro traje, aunque no vayáis a la iglesia. Si tuvieseis un asado al fuego se comprendería que no pudierais salir, viviendo solo. Pero el horno está ahí cerca. No tendríais más que resolveros a gastar de cuando en cuando una moneda de cuatro peniques para que os asaran la carne, no todas las semanas, por supuesto; a mí misma no me agradaría eso. Podríais vos mismo llevar vuestra pequeña cena a cocer, porque es razonable tener algún trozo de algo caliente el domingo. Deberíais de tratar que la comida de ese día no fuera igual a la del sábado. Pero ahora se acerca la Navidad, el santo día de Navidad, y si llevarais a asar vuestra cena y si fuéseis a la iglesia para verla adornada con muérdago y follaje, oír el oficio y comulgar en seguida, os sentiríais mucho mejor. Sabríais a qué ateneros y podríais poner vuestra confianza en Aquel que sabe más que nosotros, puesto que habríais cumplido con lo que es el deber de todos.

Esta larga exhortación de todos, que le había costado un extraordinario esfuerzo de palabras, fue pronunciada con el tono dulce y persuasivo con que se trata de conseguir que un enfermo tome su medicina o una taza de caldo que le inspirara repugnancia. Hasta entonces Silas no había sufrido presión tan directamente a propósito de su ausencia de la iglesia. El hecho había sido considerado simplemente como un rasgo del carácter general de su naturaleza extraña, y Marner era demasiado franco y sencillo para eludir el llamamiento de Dolly.

—No, no —dijo—. Yo no sé nada de la iglesia. Nunca he ido a la iglesia.

—¡Nunca! —repuso Dolly, con el tono quedo de la sorpresa.

Entonces, recordando que Silas procedía de un país desconocido, agregó:

—¿Será porque no había iglesia en el país en que nacisteis?

—¡Oh, sí! —dijo Silas con aire meditativo, sentado, según su costumbre, con los codos apoyados en las rodillas y la cabeza entre las manos—. Había iglesia, había costumbres. Era una gran ciudad, pero yo no las conozco; siempre iba a la capilla.

Dolly, muy perpleja al oír aquella expresión nueva, no se atrevió a llevar más lejos sus preguntas por temor de que la palabra capilla significara algún antro de maldad. Después de un instante de reflexión, dijo:

—Pues bien, maese Marner, nunca es demasiado tarde para cambiar de conducta. Si nunca habéis frecuentado la iglesia, no os imagináis el inmenso bien que os haría el ir a ella. Yo me siento más a mi gusto y más feliz que nunca cuando voy a oír las oraciones y los cánticos en homenaje y gloria de Dios, que el señor Macey entona, y las buenas palabras que pronuncia el señor Crackenthorp, principalmente los días de comunión. Si me ocurre alguna contrariedad siento que la puedo soportar, porque he ido a buscar ayuda donde debía. Yo me he abandonado a Aquél a quien debemos todos abandonarnos en fin, y si hemos hecho nuestro deber, no hay que creer que Aquel que está allá arriba vale menos que nosotros y no hará el suyo.

La exposición que hizo la pobre Dolly de la sencilla teología de Raveloe hirió los oídos de Silas sin que entendiera palabra; en efecto, ninguna de aquellas frases podía evocar un recuerdo de la religión que había

practicado, y su espíritu quedaba del todo desconcertado. Marner permaneció silencioso. No se sentía dispuesto a dar su asentimiento a la parte del discurso que comprendía por completo: la recomendación de ir a la iglesia. En verdad, Silas estaba tan poco acostumbrado a hablar, excepto para hacer preguntas y dar las respuestas breves indispensables para la negociación de sus pequeños negocios, que las palabras no se le ocurrían con facilidad si no eran solicitadas por un objeto determinado.

Pero ahora el pequeño Aarón, que se había acostumbrado a la presencia del terrible tejedor, se había colocado junto a su madre, y Silas, pareciendo verlo por primera vez, trató de rehuír las muestras de bondad de Dolly ofreciéndole al niño una parte de los bizcochos. Aarón retrocedió un poco y se frotó la cabeza contra el hombro de su madre. Sin embargo, pensó que el bizcocho valía la pena que se extendiera la mano para obtenerlo.

—¡Ah! ¡Aarón! —dijo Dolly tomándolo sobre las rodillas—; no necesitáis comer bizcochos por ahora. Tiene un apetito maravilloso —agregó con un ligero suspiro—, maravilloso, Dios lo sabe. Es el menor y lo mimamos de un modo deplorable; porque ya sea yo, ya sea su padre, es preciso absolutamente que uno de los dos lo tenga bajo sus ojos, absolutamente.

Acarició la cabeza de Aarón, pensando que la vista de aquel amor de niño debía de hacerle bien a maese Marner; pero éste, sentado al otro lado del hogar, no veía el rostro rosado, de rasgos bien acusados, más que como la bola obscura de dos pequeños puntos negros en la superficie.

—Y tiene una voz como la de un pájaro —prosiguió Dolly—; sabe cantar un canto de Navidad que su padre le ha enseñado. Para mí es un signo de que será bueno el que haya podido aprender tan ligero un aire religioso. Vamos, Aarón, paraos y cantadle vuestra canción a maese Marner, vamos.

Aarón, por toda respuesta, se frotó la frente contra el hombro de su madre.

—¡Oh!, eso está mal —dijo Dolly con suavidad—. Hay que levantarse cuando mamá lo manda, y dadme un bizcocho para que os lo tenga, hasta que hayáis concluido.

No le repugnaba a Aarón lucir sus talentos, aun delante de un ogro, siempre que se sintiera en seguridad. Por lo tanto, después de algunos ademanes de falsa vergüenza, consistentes principalmente en restregarse los ojos con las manos y en mirar a Marner por entre los dedos para ver si éste deseaba ardientemente oírlo cantar, se dejó al fin poner erguida la cabeza. Entonces se paró detrás de la mesa, de la que sólo sobresalía a partir del cuello. Parecía así una cabeza de querubín libre de la traba del cuerpo. Por fin, con la voz clara de un pájaro comenzó la siguiente melodía, cuyo ritmo era martillado y laborioso:

Que Dios os de paz,
alegres gentileshombres,
Que nada os espante,
Porque Jesucristo, vuestro Salvador,
Vino al mundo para Navidad.



Dolly escuchaba con aire piadoso, dirigiéndole miradas a Marner con cierta confianza de que aquellos acentos contribuirían a atraerlo a la iglesia.

—Esto es lo que se llama música de Navidad —dijo cuando Aarón hubo acabado y volvió a entrar en posesión de su bizcocho—. No hay música que esté a la altura de la música de Navidad… Y ya podéis imaginaros lo que debe ser eso en la iglesia, maese Marner, con el acompañamiento del órgano y el coro. No se puede dejar de creer que ya se está en un mundo mejor. No quisiera hablar mal de éste, visto que Aquel que nos ha puesto en él sabe algo más que nosotros; pero cuando se piensa en la embriaguez y en las riñas, así como en las enfermedades y en las angustias de los moribundos —cosas que he visto tantas y tantas veces—, complace oír hablar de una mansión más feliz. El niño canta bien, ¿no es verdad, maese Marner?

—Sí, muy bien —respondió Silas distraídamente.

El canto, con su ritmo martillado, había resonado en sus oídos como una música extraña, completamente distinta de la del himno, y no podía de ningún modo producir el efecto que Dolly esperaba. Pero Silas quería demostrarle que estaba agradecido y lo único que se le ocurrió fue ofrecerle otro bizcocho a Aarón.

—¡Oh, no!, muchas gracias, maese Marner —dijo Dolly, conteniendo las manos prontas a Aarón—. Ahora es preciso que nos volvamos a casa. Por consiguiente le digo hasta la vista, maese Marner. Si alguna vez os sentís con algún mal interior, que no os permita trabajar, yo vendré a hacer un poco de limpieza y os buscaré un poco de alimento, con toda buena voluntad. Pero os pido y os ruego que dejéis de tejer el domingo; eso es malo para el alma y para el cuerpo. El dinero que se consigue así es un mal lecho de reposo en los últimos momentos, si no se disipa como la escarcha quién sabe dónde. Disculpad que me haya tomado esta libertad con vos, maese Marner, porque os quiero bien en verdad. Aarón, haced vuestra reverencia.

Silas le dijo hasta la vista a Dolly, y le dio las gracias cordialmente abriendo la puerta. Sin embargo, a pesar suyo se sintió aliviado cuando ella se hubo marchado, satisfecho de poder volver a tejer y gemir a su gusto. Aquella manera simple de comprender la vida y el bienestar por medio del cual Dolly había tratado de alentar a Silas, no era para él más que un ruido lejano de objetos desconocidos que su imaginación era incapaz de representarle. Las fuentes del amor al prójimo y de la fe en el amor divino no se habían abierto todavía, y su alma era como un pequeño arroyo desecado. No había más que una débil diferencia, y es que el débil surco trazado en la arena estaba bloqueado, y el agua corría al azar hacia tenebrosos obstáculos.

Y así es que, a pesar de las palabras honradas y persuasivas del señor Macey y de Dolly Winthrop, Silas pasó el día de Navidad en la sociedad comiendo su cena con el corazón entristecido, bien que le hubiera sido ofrecida por una buena vecina. Por la mañana miró la helada negra que parecía oprimir cruelmente cada rama de hierba, mientras que el viento hacía rizar la charca roja, helada a medias. Pero al llegar la noche la nieve se puso a caer y le veló hasta aquella lúgubre perspectiva, encerrándolo estrechamente con su pena concentrada. Y durante toda la velada permaneció sentado en su choza despojada de su tesoro, no preocupándose de cerrar los postigos ni la puerta, oprimiéndose la cabeza entre las manos y gimiendo, hasta que lo tomó el frío y le advirtió que su fuego no era más que una ceniza gris.

Nadie en este mundo, excepto él, sabía que Silas era el mismo hombre que habiendo amado antes a su prójimo con tierno afecto había tenido confianza en una bondad invisible. Aun para sus ojos, aquella experiencia de la vida pasada se había vuelto algo obscura.

Entretanto, en la aldea de Raveloe las campanas repicaban alegremente y la iglesia estaba más llena que durante el resto del año por fieles cuyos rostros bermejos aparecían en medio de las profusas ramas de un verde obscuro, fieles preparados para un oficio más largo que el de costumbre, gracias a un almuerzo perfumado de tostadas y cerveza.

Aquellas verdes ramas, el humo y la plegaria que no se oían más que en Navidad, y hasta el Credo de San Anastasio —que sólo se distinguía de los otros en que era más largo y tenía virtud excepcional, puesto que no se le leía más que en ciertas ocasiones— producían un vago sentimiento de que algo grande y misterioso se había realizado para ellos allá en el cielo, y aquí abajo en la tierra, algo que se apropiaba con su presencia. Después los fieles de rostros bermejos se volvieron a su casa a través del frío negro y picante, sintiéndose libres, durante el resto del día, de comer, de beber y de regocijarse, usando sin temor de aquella libertad cristiana.

En la reunión de familia en casa del *squire* Cass celebrada ese día, nadie habló de Dunstan —nadie sentía la ausencia—, y temía que fuera a ser larga. El doctor y su mujer, el tío y la tía Kimble, estaban presentes.

La conversación anual de la fiesta de Navidad tuvo lugar sin ninguna omisión. Alcanzó su punto

culminante cuando el señor Kimble contó lo que había visto y oído en la época en que estudiaba medicina en los hospitales de Londres, treinta años atrás, no omitiendo las anécdotas notables concernientes a su profesión, que había recogido entonces. En seguida vinieron las partidas de los naipes con la mala suerte tradicional de la tía Kimble para hacer parejas; después la irascibilidad del tío Kimble a propósito del «trick» en el «whist». Cuando no estaba de su parte, no se lo explicaba sin hacer una inspección general de todas las bazas para asegurarse de que habían sido hechas de acuerdo con los verdaderos principios. El todo estaba acompañado por el fuerte olor de los grogs humeantes.

Pero la reunión del día de Navidad era puramente una reunión familiar que no representaba la fiesta brillante por excelencia de la estación de la Casa Roja. Ésta era el gran baile de la víspera del día del Año Nuevo que hacía la gloria de la hospitalidad del *squire*, como había hecho la de la hospitalidad de los antepasados del *squire* desde tiempo inmemorial. Ésa era la ocasión en que todos los miembros de la sociedad de Raveloe y de Tarley —ya fueran antiguas relaciones separadas por largos caminos llenos de zanjas, ya fueran relaciones enfriadas por disidencias relativas a la posesión de terneras escapadas, o ya las relaciones establecidas por una condescendencia intermitente—, contaban encontrarse y conducirse según las conveniencias recíprocas. Ésa era la ocasión en que las bellas damas que iban a caballo mandaban de antemano cajas que contenían algo más que sus trajes del baile. La fiesta, en efecto, no debía durar sólo una noche, como las mezquinas diversiones de la ciudad, en que todas las provisiones de boca son puestas de una sola vez en la mesa, y en que la lencería es insuficiente. La Casa Roja estaba aprovisionada como para resistir un sitio. En cuanto a los colchones de pluma disponibles, prontos para ser tendidos en el suelo, eran tan numerosos como podía esperárselo en una familia que había matado gansos durante muchas generaciones.



Godfrey Cass suspiraba por esa víspera del día de Año Nuevo con la impaciencia loca e irreflexiva que lo volvía medio sordo a las importunidades de su compañera, la ansiedad.

—¡Oh!, no volverá quizá a casa antes de la víspera de Año Nuevo —respondía Godfrey—. Entonces estaré sentado al lado de Nancy, bailaré con ella y he de obtener, quiéralo ella o no, alguna dulce mirada.

—Pero hay alguien que necesita dinero —decía la ansiedad con voz más fuerte—; ¿cómo vas a conseguirlo sin vender el alfiler de diamantes de tu madre? ¿Y si no puedes obtenerlo?

—Puede que ocurra algún acontecimiento que facilite las cosas. De todos modos, hay para mí un placer que está próximo: Nancy viene al baile.

—Es cierto, pero suponte que tu padre lleve las cosas a tal punto que te veas obligado a comprometerte con ella y tener que dar las razones.

—Corta tu lengua y no me mortifiques. Puedo ver los ojos de Nancy tales como me mirarán y ya siento su mano en la mía.

Sin embargo, la ansiedad siguió hablando, bien que fuera en medio de la ruidosa reunión de Navidad; se negó a callar por completo, ni aun con mucha bebida.

XI

ALGUNAS MUJERES, lo confieso, no aparecerían ventajosamente si cabalgaran a la grupa, vestidas con un abrigo de viaje color marrón y la cabeza cubierta con un sombrero de castor también color marrón, cuya copa se parece a una pequeña cacerola.

En efecto, un vestido que recuerda la hopalanda de un cochero, y que ha sido cortado en un pequeño retazo de paño con el cual no se han podido cortar capuchas en miniatura, no es muy aparente para ocultar los defectos de las formas. Por otra parte, el marrón no es un color apropiado para hacer resaltar vivamente las mejillas pálidas. Era un triunfo tanto más grande la belleza de la señorita Nancy Lammeter aparecer del todo seductora en semejante traje, cuando sentada a la grupa sobre un cojín, tras de su padre alto y derecho, ella le tomaba la cintura con uno de sus brazos y miraba hacia abajo, con ansiedad vigilante, los charcos de agua, cubiertos por una nube traidora que lanzaba salpicaduras formidables bajo los golpes de los cascos de *Dobbin*. Un pintor la hubiera preferido quizá en uno de esos momentos en que ella no tenía conciencia de sí misma; pero sin duda que esas mejillas habían alcanzado su más alto grado de contraste con la tela marrón de que iba revestida, cuando llegó a la puerta de la Casa Roja y vio a Godfrey Cass dispuesto para ayudarla a bajar del caballo. Hubiera deseado que su hermana Priscila hubiese ido a la grupa detrás del sirviente al mismo tiempo que ellos, porque entonces se hubiera arreglado para que el señor Godfrey bajara a Priscila primero. En ese intervalo ella hubiera convencido a su padre de que la diera la vuelta hasta el apeadero, en lugar de dirigirse al pie de la escalera. Es muy penoso, cuando se le ha dado a entender claramente a un joven que se tiene la resolución de no casarse con él, por más que él deseara esa unión, verlo seguir, sin embargo, teniendo atenciones especiales. Y además, ¿por qué no tenía siempre las mismas atenciones, si realmente eran sinceras de su parte, en vez de mostrarse tan incoherente como lo era el señor Godfrey Cass? Procedía a veces como si no quisiera hablarla, y no se ocupaba de ella durante varias semanas; después, de repente, casi le hacía de nuevo la corte. Además, era bien evidente que no le profesaba verdadero afecto; de otro modo no dejaría que las gentes dijeran lo que decían de él. ¿Suponía acaso que la señorita Nancy Lammeter podía ser conquistada por cualquiera, *squire* o no, que llevara mala vida? No era eso lo que estaba acostumbrada a ver en la persona de su padre, el hombre más sobrio y bueno de los alrededores, cuyo único defecto era ser algo brusco y arrebatado, de cuando en cuando, si las cosas no eran hechas en el acto.

Todos estos pensamientos atravesaron rápidamente el espíritu de la señorita Nancy en su orden habitual, entre el momento en que se advirtió al señor Godfrey Cass de pie en la puerta, y aquél en que llegó junto a él. Felizmente, el *squire* también salió a recibirles y dirigió ruidosos saludos al padre de Nancy. Se vio entonces protegida en cierto modo por aquel ruido, envolviéndose en él su confesión y su descuido de toda regla conforme con la etiqueta, cuando los vigorosos brazos del joven la ayudaban a bajar del caballo, pareciendo juzgarla ridículamente pequeña y liviana. Había las mayores razones, además, para entrar en la casa cuanto antes, pues la nieve comenzaba a caer, amenazando con un viaje desagradable a los invitados que estaban aún en camino. Éstos constituían una pequeña minoría, porque ya la tarde comenzaba a declinar y no tardarían en llegar las damas que venían de mayores distancias. Tenían que ataviarse y estar prontas antes del té, que se tomaría temprano, y que debía animarles para el baile.

Cuando la señorita Nancy entró, hubo por toda la casa un murmullo de voces, que se confundió con el ruido de un violín que estaba preludiando en la cocina. Pero la llegada de los Lammeter tenía evidentemente tan preocupadas a las gentes, que se asomaron a la ventana para verles llegar. En efecto, la señora Kimble, que hacía los honores de la Casa Roja en estas grandes ocasiones, vino al vestíbulo a recibir a la señorita Nancy y la llevó a los altos. La señora Kimble era la hermana del *squire* y la mujer del doctor, doble dignidad con la cual su diámetro estaba en razón directa. Así es que como un viaje al primer piso la

fatigaba bastante, accedió al pedido de la señorita Nancy de que le permitiera dirigirse sola hacia el cuarto azul, donde habían sido colocadas las cajas de las señoritas Lammeter cuando llegaron por la mañana.

Hubiera sido difícil encontrar un dormitorio en la casa, en el que las mujeres no estuvieran ocupadas en cumplimentarse y en prepararse. El atavío de cada una estaba más o menos adelantado, y se proseguía en un espacio reducido por las camas suplementarias tendidas en el suelo. La señorita Nancy, al entrar en el cuarto azul, tuvo que hacer una pequeña reverencia ceremoniosa a un grupo de seis damas. Hacia una parte había dos que eran nada menos que las señoritas Gunn, las hijas del negociante en vinos de Lytherley, vestidas a la última moda, con las faldas más ceñidas y las batas más cortas de talle. Las estaba examinando la señorita Ladbrook —de los Prados Viejos— con una vergüenza fingida no exenta de una contrariedad secreta. La señorita Ladbrook comprendía que las señoritas Gunn debían considerar su falda como de una amplitud exagerada; pero, en cambio, no era sensible que las señoritas Gunn estuvieran desprovistas de la sensatez que les hubiera indicado la conveniencia de no ajustarse tanto a la moda. Por otra parte, estaba la señora Ladbrook, que de cofia y con un turbante en la mano hacía una reverencia y sonreía con dulzura, diciendo: «De ningún modo; yo esperaré»; a otra dama que se hallaba en la misma posición que ella y que atentamente le ofrecía la precedencia frente al espejo.

Pero apenas la señorita Nancy hizo su reverencia, una dama de cierta edad se adelantó. El fichú de muselina extremadamente blanco de aquella dama y la papalina que cubría sus bucles de cabellos grises y lacios, formaba un contraste chocante con los trajes de raso amarillo y los tocados aparatosos de sus vecinas. Se acercó a la señorita Nancy con mucha afectación y le dijo lentamente, con voz aguda y suave:

—Espero, sobrina, que estéis en buena salud.

La señorita Nancy besó respetuosamente la mejilla de su tía, y respondió con igual afectación de amabilidad:

—En muy buena salud, mi tía, y espero que vos estéis lo mismo.

—Gracias, mi sobrina; mi salud se conserva por ahora. ¿Cómo está mi cuñado?

Estas preguntas y estas respuestas respetuosas no cesaron hasta que se hubo averiguado que todos los Lammeter estaban en tan buena salud como de costumbre, lo mismo que los Osgood; además, la sobrina Priscila debía seguramente de estar por llegar, y que no era muy agradable viajar a la grupa con tiempo de nieve, bien que una capa de viaje abrigara mucho.

Entonces, Nancy fue presentada a los visitantes de su tía, la señora Gunn.

Éstos fueron anunciados como las hijas de una dama conocida de la señora Lammeter, bien que ellas mismas no se hubieran resuelto nunca a hacer un viaje a aquellos parajes. Quedaron tan sorprendidas de encontrar una fisonomía y maneras tan encantadoras en un sitio apartado de la campaña, que empezaron a sentir cierta curiosidad por saber qué traje se pondría Nancy después que se quitara el abrigo. La atención de la señorita Nancy estaba siempre fija en la cortesía y moderación que se observaba siempre en sus maneras. Se puso a observar que las señoritas Gunn tenían más bien facciones groseras y que la idea de ponerse trajes escotados como los suyos hubiera podido ser atribuida a la vanidad si tuviesen lindos hombros. Sin embargo, teniendo semejantes hombros, había que suponer sensatamente que aquellas señoritas no lo hacían por el deseo de exhibirlos, sino más bien a causa de una obligación que no era incompatible con el buen sentido y la modestia.

Tenía la convicción al abrir la caja que contenía su traje que ésa sería la opinión de la señora Osgood, porque el espíritu de la señorita Nancy se parecía de un modo extraordinario al de su tía. Todo el mundo decía que era una cosa sorprendente, puesto que el parentesco procedía por el lado del señor Osgood; y bien que la forma ceremoniosa de sus saludos no lo hubiera hecho suponer, había un afecto, una admiración recíproca entre la tía y la sobrina. Ni aun la negativa de la señorita Nancy de aceptar la mano de su primo Gilberto Osgood —simplemente a causa de que era su primo— no había enfriado absolutamente la preferencia que había determinado a la señora Osgood, a pesar del gran disgusto que aquella negativa le había causado, a dejarle a Nancy varias alhajas de familia, cualquiera que fuese la esposa futura de su hijo.

Tres damas se retiraron muy luego; pero no las señoritas Gunn, que el deseo de la señora Osgood de esperar a su sobrina, les diera motivo para quedarse, a ver el traje de aquella belleza rústica. Hubo para ellas un verdadero placer, desde el momento en que se abrió la caja en que todo olía a alhucema y hojas de rosas, hasta que el pequeño collar de corales quedó ceñido a su fino cuello blanco. Todas las cosas pertenecientes a la señorita Nancy eran de una limpieza y de una pureza delicadas: ni un solo pliegue dejaba de tener su razón de ser; ni la más pequeña pieza de sus ropas carecía de la blancura que se supondría debía tener; hasta los alfileres de su almohadilla estaban clavados según un modelo de que tenía la prolijidad de no apartarse; y, en cuanto a su misma persona, daba la idea de una elegancia tan invariable y exquisita como la de un pequeño pájaro.

Es cierto que sus cabellos obscuros estaban cortados en la nuca como los de un muchacho, y estaban dispuestos adelante en cierto número de bucles chatos que se apartaban mucho de su rostro. Pero no había peinado que no hiciera encantadores el cuello y las mejillas de Nancy. Cuando por fin apareció completamente vestida, con su traje de seda cruzada color plata, con su cuello de encajes, su collar y sus pendientes de coral, las señoritas Gunn no encontraron nada que criticarle, a no ser sus manos.

Éstas tenían las huellas dejadas por la fabricación de la manteca, del queso y aun de alguna otra tarea más grosera. La señorita Nancy no se avergonzaba, por su parte, de esto. En efecto, a la vez que se vestía, la joven contaba a su tía cómo habían hecho su hermana Priscila y ella para poner sus ropas en las cajas la víspera, porque esa mañana tenían que amasar, y limpiar la casa. Era, pues, conveniente que dejaran además una buena provisión de fiambres para los sirvientes. Al terminar estas observaciones, la señorita Nancy se volvió también hacia las señoritas Gunn a fin de evitar la falta de cortesía de no dirigirse a ellas al mismo tiempo.

Las señoritas Gunn sonrieron con tiesura y pensaron que era lástima que aquellas personas ricas de la campaña que tenían medios de comprar tan ricos trajes —en verdad, el encaje y la seda de Nancy eran de gran precio— fueran criadas en la completa ignorancia y la vulgaridad. La señorita Nancy, decía, en efecto, *descote*, por *escote, naguas* por *enaguas* y *haiga* por *haya*, faltas que chocaban necesariamente a los oídos jóvenes que frecuentaban la buena sociedad de Lytherley. Éstas hablaban lo mismo en la intimidad de la familia, pero pocas veces decían *haiga* delante de los extraños. La señorita Nancy, en verdad, nunca había visto más escuela que la de la maestra Tedman. Sus conocimientos de la literatura profana no iban más allá de los versos que había bordado en una gran tapicería, bajo el pastor y la pastora; y para arreglar una cuenta tenía que hacer la resta quitando chelines y medios chelines metálicos y visibles de un total metálico y visible. Apenas hay en nuestros días una sirvienta que no sea más instruida de lo que estaba la señorita Nancy. Sin embargo, ésta tenía las cualidades esenciales de una joven bien educada: un gran amor por la verdad, un sentimiento delicado del honor de sus actos, deferencias para con los demás y costumbres personales refinadas. Pero por temor de que estas cualidades no bastan para convencer a las bellas gramáticas, de que los sentimientos de Nancy se parecían nada a los suyos, agregaré que era un poco orgullosa y exigente, y tan constante en su aferramiento en una opinión errónea como en su afecto por un suspirante infiel.

La inquietud de Nancy por su hermana Priscila, que había llegado a ser bastante intensa en el momento en que se prendía el collar de corales, cesó felizmente al ver entrar a aquella de carácter alegre; entró con una cara vivamente coloreada por el frío y la humedad. Después de las primeras preguntas y los primeros saludos, Priscila se volvió hacia Nancy y la contempló de pies a cabeza; después la hizo dar media vuelta para convencerse de que, vista de espaldas, estaba igualmente irreprochable.

—¿Qué pensáis de estos vestidos, tía Osgood? —dijo Priscila, mientras Nancy la ayudaba a quitar la saya.

—Muy hermosos, en verdad, sobrina —respondió la señora Osgood, acentuando ligeramente el tono ceremonioso que usaba de ordinario.

Siempre había considerado a su sobrina Priscila como demasiado ordinaria.



—Me veo obligada a usar el mismo traje que Nancy, aunque tengo cinco años más que ella, y eso me hace parecer amarilla. No quiere tener nunca una cosa sin que yo tenga otra exactamente igual; desea que nos crean gemelas. Yo le digo que las personas van a considerar esto como una debilidad de mi parte imaginándome que me pondrá bonita el usar ropas que a ella le sientan bien. Porque yo soy fea, no cabe duda, tengo las facciones de la familia de mi padre. Pero a mí eso qué me importa, ¿y a vosotras?

Priscila en ese momento, sin cesar de hablar, se volvió hacia las señoritas Gunn. Estaba demasiado preocupada por el placer de hablar para darse cuenta de que su candor no era apreciado.

—Hay bastantes flores para atraer a las mariposas; las mujeres bonitas alejan a los hombres de nosotras. Tengo mala opinión de ellos, señorita Gunn; no sé si vosotras la tendréis buena. Y en cuanto a atormentarse y mortificarse a propósito de lo que piensan de una y amargarse la vida pensando en lo que hacen cuando no están a vuestro lado, como siempre le digo a Nancy, es una locura en que ninguna mujer debiera incurrir si tiene un buen padre y un buen hogar. Que deje eso para las que no tienen fortuna y no saben cómo salir de apuros. Así es que yo siempre digo, el señor Haz-tu-gusto es el mejor marido y el solo a que deseo obedecer. Yo sé que no es agradable cuando se ha estado acostumbrado a vivir holgadamente y a cuidar los barriles de cerveza, así como otras cosas parecidas, el ir a meter las narices en casa ajena o sentarse sola a la mesa, delante de un cogote de carnero o de un jarrete de buey. Pero, a Dios gracias, mi padre es sobrio. Es probable que vivirá mucho, y hay un hombre sentado junto al fuego, poco importa que esté chocho; no tiene por qué abandonar su puesto.

La forma cuidadosa con que Priscila se pasaba la falda por la cabeza, sin despeinar sus bucles lisos, obligó a la señora a suspender su rápido examen de la vida humana. La señora Osgood aprovechó la coyuntura para ponerse de pie y decir:

—Bien, sobrina, vosotras nos seguiréis. Las señoritas Gunn han de estar deseosas de bajar.

—Hermana mía —le dijo Nancy a Priscila cuando estuvieron solas—, habéis ofendido sin duda alguna a las señoritas Gunn.

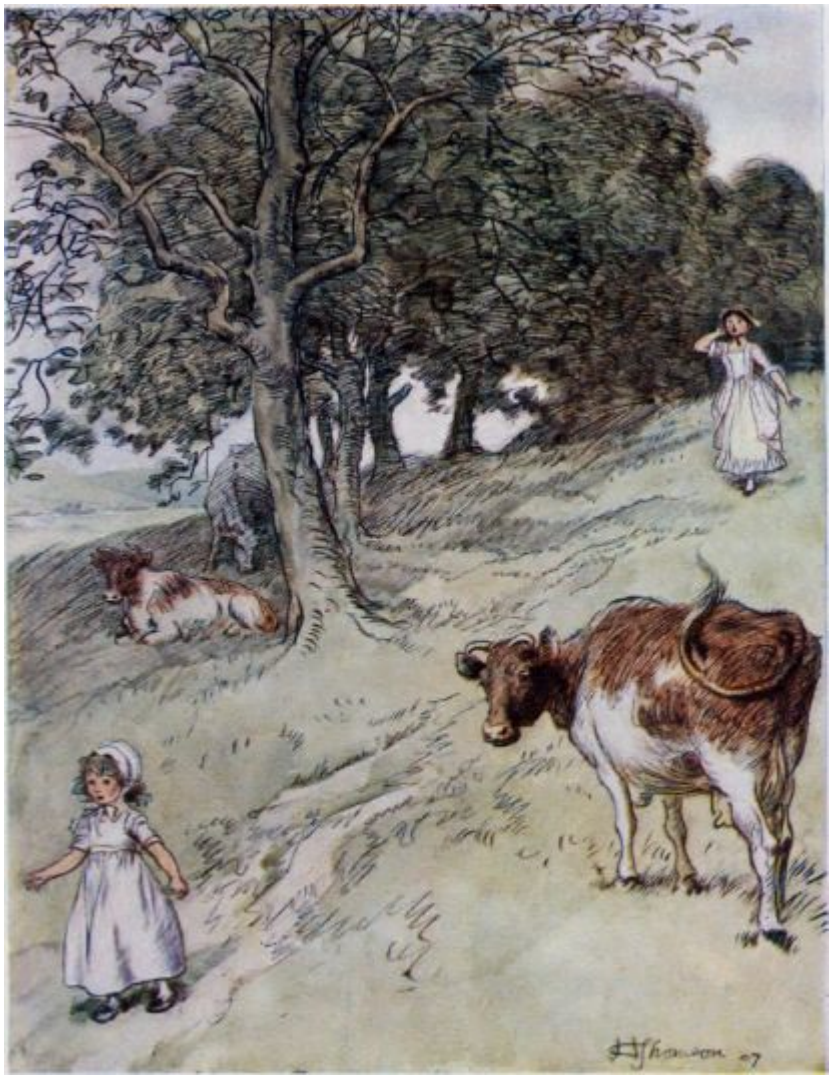
—¿Por qué, hija mía? —respondió Priscila bastante alarmada.

—Les habéis preguntado si no les importaba ser feas; decís las cosas con demasiada crudeza.

—¡Dios mío, es cierto! Se me escapó sin pensarlo, y gracias al Cielo que no dije algo más. Yo no puedo vivir entre personas que temen la verdad. Pero en cuanto a ser fea, miradme un poco con este traje de seda color plata. Ya os había dicho lo que iba a suceder. Parezco tan amarilla como una caléndula. Cualquiera diría que habéis querido hacer de mí un espantapájaros.

—No, Priscila; no habléis así. Yo os pedí y rogué que no eligierais esa seda si hubiera otra que os conviniera más. Quería que fueseis vos la que escogiera, bien lo sabéis —respondió Nancy con vivo deseo de justificarse.

—¡Vamos, vamos!, niña; vos sabéis que esta tela os agradaba y teníais buenas razones para ello, puesto que vuestro rostro es del color de la crema. Estaría bueno que llevarais lo que a mí me sentara bien. Lo que no apruebo es vuestra idea de que me vista como vos. Pero hacéis de mí lo que queréis. Así ha sido siempre, desde cuando comenzasteis a caminar. Cuando queríais ir hasta el fin del campo, ibais, y no había qué pensar en castigaros, porque siempre parecíais tan graciosita e inocente como una malva.



—Priscila —dijo Nancy con suave voz, al ceñir el cuello de su hermana, tan distinto al de ella, un collar de corales exactamente igual al suyo—, os aseguro que estoy dispuesta a ceder en todo lo que es razonable; pero ¿quiénes deben de vestirse iguales a no ser dos hermanas? ¿Querríais que cuando salimos no pareciéramos de la misma familia, nosotras, nosotras que no tenemos madre ni otra persona en el mundo? Yo no haré sino lo que sea conveniente, aunque tenga que ponerme un vestido amarillo color canario, y preferiría que fuerais vos la que eligierais y me dejarais llevar lo que os place.

—¡Ya estáis otra vez con el mismo tema! No cambiaríais de tono aunque hablarais la semana entera. Va a ser muy divertido ver cómo manejaréis a vuestro marido si no alza nunca más la voz que una caldera de agua hirviendo. A mí me agrada ver llevar a los hombres de las narices.

—No habléis así —dijo Nancy sonrojándose—. Bien sabéis que no tengo la intención de casarme.

—¡Oh! ¡No tenéis absolutamente la intención de hacer esa tontería! —dijo Priscila doblando el vestido que acababa de quitarse y colocándolo en la caja—. ¿Para quién habría trabajado yo entonces, cuando muera nuestro padre, si se os pone en la cabeza quedaros solterona, porque ciertas personas no son mejores de lo que debieron ser? Ya se me está agotando la paciencia a vuestro respecto, viéndoos siempre empollando un huevo hueco, como si no hubiera otros en el mundo. Conque no se case una de las dos hermanas basta, y yo haré honor al celibato, porque Dios me puso en el mundo para eso. ¡Vamos! Ahora podemos bajar. Estoy realmente tan bien entrazada como puede estarlo un espantajo. Ahora que me he puesto los aros no me falta nada para asustar a los cuervos.

Cuando las dos señoritas Lammeter entraron al salón de recepción, el que no hubiera conocido el carácter de cada una de ellas hubiera podido sin duda suponer que la razón que había inducido a Priscila, de acciones vulgares, retaca y mal hecha, a vestir un traje igual al de su linda hermana, era su ciega vanidad o la maliciosa ocurrencia de Nancy para realzar de ese modo su singular belleza física.

Pero la alegría inconsciente y la excelente naturaleza de Priscila, así como su buen sentido, pronto hubieran hecho desaparecer la primera de estas sospechas; mientras que la calma modesta de la conversación y de las maneras de Nancy anunciaban claramente un espíritu exento de todo artificio reprochable.

Para el té los sitios de honor fueron reservados a las señoritas Lammeter, junto a la cabecera de la mesa principal, en el salón artesonado. Aquella pieza parecía entonces tener una frescura agradable, con sus decoraciones de follaje procedentes de la vegetación abundante del antiguo jardín.

Nancy sintió entonces una agitación interior que no pudo dominar la firmeza de su propósito al ver adelantarse al señor Godfrey Cass para conducirla a su sitio colocado entre el suyo y el del señor Crackenthorp; mientras que Priscila fue invitada del otro lado, entre su padre y el *squire*. Nancy no podía pensar sin alguna emoción que el pretendiente a que había renunciado era el joven que ocupaba más alto rango entre las personas de la parroquia, encontrándose en su casa, en un salón venerable y único que la experiencia de aquella joven representaba el apogeo de la grandeza, salón en que ella, la señorita Nancy, podría ser un día la dueña de casa, y pensaba que hablando de ella la llamarían la señora Cass, la esposa del *squire*.

Estas particularidades realzaban ante sus ojos el drama de su corazón y reforzaban la energía con que se decía que la posición más deslumbradora no la decidiría a aceptar por marido un hombre cuya conducta demostraba el poco caso que hacía de su propia reputación. Pero agregaba que «no amar más que una vez y amar siempre» era la divisa de una mujer sincera y pura, así es que ningún hombre tendría jamás el derecho de destruir las flores secas que conservaba y conservaría siempre como un tesoro por el amor de Godfrey Cass. Y Nancy era capaz de sostener en las circunstancias más penosas la palabra que se daba a sí misma. Nada, a no ser un sonrojo hesitante, traicionó la emoción causada por los pensamientos que se agolpaban a su espíritu, cuando aceptó sentarse junto al señor Crackenthorp, porque era instintivamente tan exacta y hábil en todos sus actos y sus lindos labios se cerraban con una firmeza tan tranquila, que le hubiera sido difícil parecer agitada.

El pastor no tenía la costumbre de dejar disipar un sonrojo encantador sin hacer un cumplimiento oportuno. No era nada orgulloso ni aristocrático. Era sencillamente un hombre de grandes ojos sonrientes, de rasgos poco caracterizados y cabellos grises, cuyo mentón estaba sostenido por las numerosas vueltas de una amplia corbata blanca. Aquella corbata parecía eclipsar todas las otras partes de su persona, y, por decirlo así, comunicar un relieve particular a las observaciones que hacía; así es que considerar su amenidad independientemente de esa parte de su traje hubiera importado un esfuerzo de abstracción penoso si no peligroso.

—¡Ah!, señorita Nancy —dijo, haciendo girar la cabeza dentro de aquella corbata y sonriendo

agradablemente al mirar a la joven—, si alguien llegara a pretender que este invierno es riguroso, yo le diría que he visto florecer las rosas la víspera de año nuevo; decidme, Godfrey, ¿no sois de mi misma opinión?

Godfrey no respondió y evitó el mirar a Nancy con fijeza; porque bien que aquellos personalismos elogiosos fueran considerados como de muy buen gusto en la vieja sociedad de Raveloe, el amor reverente tiene una urbanidad particular que enseña a los hombres cuya instrucción es defectuosa bajo otros respectos.

Pero al *squire* lo apenó que su hijo se mostrara un festejante tan infeliz. A aquella hora avanzada del día estaba siempre de mejor humor del que le vimos en el almuerzo, y se sentía muy satisfecho al cumplir con el deber, hereditario en su familia, de mostrarse protector ruidoso y jovial. La gran tabaquera de plata estaba en servicio positivo, y, de tiempo en tiempo, era ofrecida invariablemente a todos sus vecinos, cualquiera que fuese el número de veces que ya hubiesen rechazado aquel favor.

Hasta aquí el *squire* no había dado la bienvenida de un modo señalado más que a los jefes de familia a su llegada; pero siempre, a medida que avanzaba la tarde, su hospitalidad irradiaba con más amplitud, hasta que golpeaba las espaldas de los invitados más jóvenes y manifestaba la particular satisfacción que le proporcionaba su presencia. Creía firmemente que éstos debían de sentirse dichosos de vivir en una parroquia que contaba con un hombre tan cordial como el *squire* Cass que los invitaba a su casa y los quería bien. Aun en aquella primera fase de su humor jovial era natural que deseara suplir las imperfecciones de su hijo mirando y hablando por él.

—Sí, sí —comenzó a decir, presentando su tabaquera al señor Lammeter, que por segunda vez inclinó la cabeza e hizo seña con la mano para rechazar obstinadamente el ofrecimiento del *squire*—, sí, nosotros los viejos bien podemos desear ser jóvenes esta noche al ver el ramo de muérdago suspendido en el salón blanco. Es cierto que la mayor parte de las cosas han retrogradado en estos últimos treinta años. El país periclita desde que nuestro rey Jorge III cayó enfermo. Pero cuando miro a la señorita Nancy, aquí presente, comienzo a creer que las jóvenes conservan sus encantos. Que me ahorquen si recuerdo haber visto belleza que le sea comparable, aun en la época en que yo era un guapo mozo, dicho sea esto sin ofenderos, señora —agregó, inclinándose hacia la señora Crackenthorp, sentada a su lado—; a vos ni os conocía cuando erais joven como la señorita Nancy aquí presente.



La señora Crackenthorp, pequeña mujer que pestañeaba un ojo y agitaba continuamente sus encajes, sus cintas y su cadena de oro, volviendo la cabeza a derecha e izquierda, haciendo así ruidos reprimidos que se parecían mucho al gruñido de un cerdo de la India cuando contrae el hocico y monologa ante cualquier reunión, la señora Crackenthorp, digo, pestañeó entonces y continuó agitándose al volverse hacia el *squire*; después, por fin, respondió:

—¡Oh, no; no me ofendéis!…

Aquel cumplimiento expresivo dirigido por el *squire* a Nancy, fue considerado por todos, menos por Godfrey, como un acto de diplomacia; y el padre de aquella joven se irguió un poco más, mirándola a través de la mesa con seria satisfacción. Aquel anciano, grave y regular en sus actos, no iba a comprometer en un ápice su dignidad, mostrándose henchido de orgullo ante la idea de una unión entre su familia y la del *squire*. Le halagaba todo honor tributado a su familia; sin embargo, era preciso que viera un cambio bajo todos respectos antes de acordar su consentimiento. Su cuerpo flaco, pero robusto, y su rostro de rasgos acentuados que parecía no haber sido nunca encendido por los excesos, formaban un contraste chocante, no sólo con la persona del *squire*, sino con los propietarios de Raveloe en general, lo que estaba de acuerdo con su dicho favorito: «que la raza primaba la dehesa».

—La señorita Nancy se parece de un modo sorprendente a su finada madre; ¿no es cierto, doctor Kimble? —dijo la gorda señora de este apellido buscando con los ojos por todas partes a su marido.

El doctor Kimble —los boticarios de campaña gozaban antiguamente de aquel título sin la sanción de un diploma—, hombre esbelto y ágil corría de un extremo a otro de la pieza con las manos en los bolsillos. Se hacía agradable a sus clientes del bello sexo con la imparcialidad de un hombre de su posición, y en todas partes era el bien venido en su calidad de doctor por derecho hereditario. No era uno de esos boticarios desgraciados que van en busca de una clientela a las localidades nuevas y que gastan todo su haber en hacer morir de hambre a su único caballo; por el contrario, era un hombre de posición acomodada, tan capaz de sostener una mesa superabundante como el más rico de sus clientes.

Desde tiempo inmemorial, el doctor de Raveloe era un Kimble. Kimble era esencialmente un apellido de doctor, así es que era difícil imaginar en esta triste realidad que el Kimble actual no tenía hijo, y que, por lo tanto, su clientela podría ser transmitida un día a un sucesor que llevara el incongruente apellido de Taylor o de Johnson. Pero, en tal caso, los vecinos más razonables de Raveloe llamarían al doctor Blick de Flitton, lo que sería más natural.



—¿Me habéis hablado, querida? —dijo el digno doctor dirigiéndose rápidamente al lado de su mujer.

Sin embargo, como si previera que ella estaría demasiado jadeante para repetir la observación que acababa de hacer, prosiguió inmediatamente:

—¡Ah!, señorita Priscila, vuestra presencia reaviva el gusto de este superfino pastel de cerdo. Hago votos porque la hornada esté lejos de agotarse.

—En verdad, lo está, doctor —respondió Priscila—; sin embargo, garantizo que la próxima será tan buena como ésta. Mis pasteles de cerdo no salen buenos por casualidad.

—No sucede así con vuestras curas, ¿verdad, Kimble? Sólo salen bien, ¿es cierto?, cuando los enfermos se olvidan de tomar vuestros remedios —dijo el *squire* que consideraba a la medicina y a los médicos como muchos hombres lealmente religiosos consideran a la iglesia y al clero.

Saboreaba una burla dirigida contra los doctores y su ciencia cuando estaba en buena salud, pero reclamaba su auxilio con impaciencia así que sentía algo. Golpeó la tabaquera y echó una mirada a su rededor con aire de triunfo.

—¡Ah!, en verdad que tiene espíritu sutil, mi amiga Priscila —prosiguió el doctor, prefiriendo atribuir el chiste a una dama antes que reconocer la ventaja que al hacerlo había tomado el *squire* sobre su cuñado—. ¡Deja a un lado un poco de pimienta para sazonar la conversación; por eso es que no la hay en exceso en sus platos! Aquí tenéis a mi mujer que, por el contrario, nunca tiene la respuesta en la punta de la lengua; desgraciadamente, si llego a ofenderla no deja de quemarme la garganta con pimienta al otro día, o si no me da cólicos con legumbres refrescantes. Es una venganza atroz.

Y al decir esto, el ágil doctor hizo una mueca expresiva.

—¿Habéis oído nunca cosa semejante? —dijo la señora Kimble riendo de muy buen humor por encima de su doble sotabarba, a la señora Crackenthorp, que parpadeaba de un ojo, meneaba la cabeza y tenía la amable intención de sonreír.

Pero esta intención se perdió en ligeros rezongos y ruidos.

—Supongo, Kimble, que ésa es la especie de venganza adoptada en vuestra profesión si os irritáis contra un enfermo —dijo el pastor.

—Nunca nos enojamos con nuestros enfermos, sino cuando nos dejan —respondió el doctor Kimble—. Y entonces ya no tenemos ocasión de hacerles prescripciones. ¡Ah!, señorita Nancy —prosiguió poniéndose de golpe al lado de ella, dando saltitos—, no vayáis a olvidar vuestra promesa. ¡Tenéis que reservarme una pieza, ya lo sabéis!

—¡Vamos, vamos, Kimble; no os apresuréis tanto! —dijo el *squire*—. Dejad a los jóvenes las oportunidades de triunfar. Aquí está mi hijo Godfrey que os arrojará el guante si os apoderáis de la señorita Nancy. La ha invitado para la primera pieza, estoy seguro. ¿No es cierto, señor? ¿Qué me decís? —continuó, echándose hacia atrás para mirar a Godfrey—. ¿No le habéis pedido a la señorita Nancy que os acompañe para abrir el baile?

Godfrey estaba lo más molesto a causa de aquella insistencia significativa respecto de la señorita Nancy. Asustado al pensar qué fin tendría todo aquello cuando su padre, según su costumbre, hubiera dado el ejemplo hospitalario de beber antes y después de la cena, no se le ocurrió cosa mejor que volverse hacia Nancy y decirle lo mejor que pudo:

—No, todavía no se lo he pedido; pero confío que aceptará, si otra persona no se ha presentado ya.

—No, todavía no me he comprometido —contestó Nancy con tranquilidad, aunque sonrojándose. (Si el señor Godfrey fundaba algunas esperanzas en que Nancy consintiera en bailar con él, pronto se iba a desengañar; pero no había razón alguna para que no se mostrara atenta).

—Entonces, espero que no tendréis ningún motivo para no bailar conmigo —prosiguió Godfrey, comenzando a no darse ya cuenta de que había algo de molesto en aquel arreglo.

—No, ningún motivo —respondió Nancy con frialdad.

—¡Ah! En verdad que tenéis suerte, Godfrey —dijo el tío Kimble—. Pero sois mi ahijado, y por eso no quiero soplaros la dama. Por lo demás, no estoy tan viejo, querida, ¿no es cierto? —prosiguió, volviéndose a saltitos al lado de su mujer—. ¿No os importaría nada que os diera una sucesora, en caso de que desaparecierais, con tal de que antes llorara mucho?

—¡Vamos, vamos, tomad una taza de té y retened vuestra lengua, os ruego! —dijo la alegre señora Kimble, sintiendo cierto orgullo de tener un marido que la reunión debía considerar como de los más hábiles y divertidos.

¡Lástima que fuera tan irritable cuando jugaba a la baraja!

Mientras que aquellas personalidades inofensivas, bien puestas a prueba ya, animaban el té de aquel

modo, las notas de un violín se acercaron bastante como para que se las oyera claramente. Entonces los jóvenes se miraron con expresión simpática en que se leía la impaciencia de que terminara la colación.

—Ya está Salomón en el vestíbulo —dijo el *squire*—, y me parece que toca mi aire favorito: «El pequeño labrador de cabellos rubios». Nos quiere insinuar que no nos damos bastante prisa para oírlo tocar. Bob —agregó dirigiéndose a su tercer hijo, mozo de largas piernas que estaba en el otro extremo de la mesa—, abrid la puerta y decidle a Salomón que entre. Que nos toque aquí una pieza.

Bob obedeció y Salomón entró tocando, porque por nada del mundo quería detenerse a mitad de un aire.

—Aquí, Salomón —dijo el *squire* con un tono alto y protector—. Aquí, mi viejo. ¡Ah!, ya sabía yo que tocabais «El pequeño labrador de cabellos rubios». No hay aire más hermoso.

Salomón Macey, viejecito todavía fuerte, con copiosos cabellos blancos que le descendían casi hasta los hombros, se adelantó hacia el sitio designado. Hizo una profunda reverencia sin dejar de tocar como para hacer comprender que tenía respeto a la reunión pero que respetaba aún más la música. Así que hubo terminado la pieza y bajado el violín, se inclinó de nuevo ante el *squire* y ante el pastor, diciendo:

—Espero que veo a vuestro honor y vuestra reverencia en buena salud; os deseo larga vida y un buen y feliz año nuevo. Y a vos igualmente, señor Lammeter, y a los demás señores y a las damas y a los jóvenes.

Al pronunciar estas últimas palabras Salomón se inclinaba hacia todos lados con solicitud, temeroso de faltar al respeto que debía. Después se puso inmediatamente a preludiar, y pasó luego a tocar el aire que sabía que el señor Lammeter consideraría como un cumplimiento personal.

—Gracias, Salomón, gracias —dijo el señor Lammeter, cuando el violín se detuvo de nuevo—; tocáis en «las colinas, de lejos, muy lejos». Mi padre me decía siempre que oíamos esa música: «¡Ah, hijo mío, yo también vengo de allende las colinas, de lejos, muy lejos!». Hay muchos aires que no tienen para mí pies ni cabeza; pero ése me habla como el silbido del mirlo. Supongo que eso depende del nombre: el nombre de una pieza dice muchas cosas.

Pero Salomón ardía ya por preludiar de nuevo, y sin tardanza atacó con brío «*Sir* Roger de Coverley». En seguida se oyó el ruido de las sillas y un murmullo de risas.

—Sí, sí, Salomón, ya sabemos lo que eso significa —dijo el *squire* poniéndose de pie—. Ya es tiempo de que comience el baile, ¿verdad? Id delante, todos vamos a seguiros.

Entonces Salomón, inclinando sobre el hombro su cabeza blanca y tocando con vigor, se adelantó, seguido del alegre cortejo, hacia el salón en que estaba suspendido un ramo de muérdago.

Una multitud de velas de sebo brillaba en medio de las ramas de brezo cubiertas de bayas. Se reflejaban en los espejos ovalados a la moda antigua, fijado en los tableros blancos, en los que producían un efecto bastante lucido. ¡Extraño cortejo! El viejo Salomón con sus ropas raídas y sus cabellos blancos parecía arrastrar a aquella honesta compañía con los mágicos acentos de su violín; arrastraba a las matronas prudentes, que llevaban tocados en forma de turbantes; a la propia señora Crackenthorp, que tenía la cabeza adornada con una pluma perpendicular cuya punta llegaba al hombro del *squire*; arrastraba a las bellas jóvenes que pensaban con satisfacción en sus talles cortos y en sus ropas sin pliegues adelante; arrastraba a sus padres corpulentos que vestían chalecos abigarrados y a los hijos rubicundos, en su mayor parte avergonzados y cohibidos, con pantalón corto y frac de largos faldones.



El señor Macey y algunos otros aldeanos privilegiados a quienes se permitía ser espectadores de esas grandes ocasiones, estaban ya sentados en bancos colocados con ese objeto cerca de la puerta. Grandes fueron la admiración y la satisfacción de éstos cuando las parejas se fueron formando para la danza, y el *squire* y la señora de Crackenthorp abrieron el baile, haciendo bis a bis y dando las manos al pastor y a la señora Osgood.

Así es como debían hacerse las cosas; a este espectáculo es que todo el mundo estaba acostumbrado y la corte de Raveloe parecía renovarse para esta ceremonia. No se consideraba así como una ligereza indecorosa que las personas viejas y las de cierta edad bailaran un poco antes de sentarse a jugar a los naipes; esto era más bien considerado como una parte de sus deberes oficiales. Porque, ¿en qué consistían esos deberes si no era en divertirse en tiempo oportuno; en trocar visitas y saludos tan a menudo como era preciso; en dirigirse recíprocamente viejos cumplimientos con frases tradicionales; en dar bromas bien puestas a prueba para no ofender a nadie; en obligar, hospitalariamente, a los invitados a comer y a beber con exceso, en la casa del vecino, para demostrar que se apreciaban sus manjares?

El pastor daba, naturalmente, el ejemplo de esos deberes sociales; porque a los espíritus de Raveloe no les hubiera sido posible, sin una revelación divina particular, el pensar que un eclesiástico debía ser un pálido momento de las solemnidades del culto en lugar de ser un hombre dotado de defectos razonables, cuya autoridad exclusiva de leer las oraciones y de predicar, de bautizar, casar y enterrar, coexistía necesariamente con el derecho de venderos el terreno para inhumaros, y de percibir el diezmo en especias. Respecto a este último punto había, como es consiguiente, algunas recriminaciones; pero, sin embargo, no llegaban hasta la impiedad. No tenían un significado más profundo que las protestas contra la lluvia; murmuraciones que no iban acompañadas por un espíritu de desconfianza irreligiosa, sino por el deseo de que la plegaria que debía traer el buen tiempo fuera dicha inmediatamente.

Puesto que el pastor bailaba, no había, pues, razón alguna para que ese acto no fuera aceptado como una parte del orden de las cosas, lo mismo que si se tratara del *squire*. Tampoco la había por otra parte, para que el respeto oficial que el señor Macey debía al pastor, le impidiera someter el modo de bailar de su superior a esa crítica que los espíritus de la penetración extraordinaria son llamados necesariamente a ejercer sobre la conducta de sus semejantes.

—El *squire* es bastante ágil, dado su peso —dijo el señor Macey—, y su manera de golpear con el pie absolutamente notable. Pero el señor Lammeter vence a todo el mundo por su parte. Fijaos bien, yergue la cabeza como un soldado y no es gordo como la mayor parte de los burgueses que entran en años y tienen la pierna bien formada. El pastor no carece de gracia; pero su pierna no tiene nada de notable. Es algo gruesa por demás hacia abajo y sus rodillas podrían juntarse algo más; sin embargo, podría ser peor formado bien que no tenga esa soberbia manera del *squire* para manejar la mano.

—Habláis de agilidad, mirad entonces a la señora Osgood —dijo Ben Winthrop, que sostenía a su hijo Aarón entre las rodillas—; agita tan ligeramente sus pies que no se puede ver cómo camina; parece que tuviera ruedecitas bajo los pies. No parece haber envejecido un día desde el año pasado. No hay una mujer mejor formada que ella, esté donde esté la que la siga.

—No me preocupa de saber si las mujeres son bien formadas —dijo el señor Macey con cierto desprecio —. No llevan casaca ni pantalón, de modo que no es posible juzgar sus formas.

—Papá —dijo Aarón, cuyos pies estaban ocupados en tamborilear el compás de la música—, ¿cómo se sostiene esa pluma tan larga en la cabeza de la señora Crackenthorp? ¿Tendrá un agujerito para meterla como en mi volante?



—Cállate, niño, cállate. Así es como se visten las damas, sí en verdad —respondió el padre, que agregó, sin embargo, a media voz, dirigiéndose al señor Macey—. La verdad es que eso le da un aspecto singular. Casi se parece a una botella de cuello corto con una gran pluma adentro. Ahí tenéis, a la fe mía, al joven *squire* que comienza a bailar con la señorita Nancy. Ésa sí que está a vuestro gusto. Parece un ramo de rosa y blanco. Nadie imaginaría que pudiera haber otras tan bonitas. No me sorprendería que un día llegara a ser la señora de Cass, al fin y al cabo. Ninguna joven sería más digna de eso, porque sería una linda pareja. No podéis tener nada que observar a la figura del señor Godfrey, os apuesto dos peniques, en verdad.



El señor Macey contrajo los labios, inclinó más todavía la cabeza hacia un costado y sus pulgares se pusieron a girar con un movimiento rápido, mientras que sus ojos seguían a Godfrey a través del baile. Por último resumió su opinión:

—Es bastante bien hacia abajo; pero sus espaldas son demasiado redondas. Y en cuanto a esas ropas que encarga al sastre de Flitton, son de un corte bastante pobre para ser pagadas el doble.

—¡Ah!, señor Macey, vos y yo somos dos —dijo Ben, ligeramente indignado por aquella crítica meticulosa—. Cuando tengo delante de mí un jarro de cerveza, me gusta beberlo y hacerle bien a mi estómago, en lugar de oler el líquido y de mirarlo con los ojos muy abiertos para ver si no tengo algo que observarle a su fabricación. Quisiera que me mostraseis un joven más apuesto que maese Godfrey; un joven más robusto o que tuviera mejor cara que él cuando está despierto y de buen humor.

—¡Bah! —dijo el señor Macey, provocando a criticar con más severidad—. Todavía no ha tomado su verdadero color; está más o menos como un pastel cocido a medias. Tengo idea de que tiene el cerebro un poco débil, si no, ¿por qué se dejaría engañar por ese pícaro de Dunsey, a quien nadie ha visto últimamente, y por qué lo dejó matar a ese lindo caballo de caza de que todos hacían elogios? Y durante un tiempo siempre andaba buscando a la señorita Nancy y después todo se desvaneció, por decir así, como el olor de la sopa cuando se enfría. Yo no procedía así en los tiempos en que hacía la corte.

—¡Ah!, quizá la señorita Nancy se haya retirado, y no os sucedió eso con vuestra novia.

—Seguramente —respondió el señor Macey con aire significativo—. Antes de decir «cric», yo tenía mucho cuidado de saber si ella diría «crac», y sin andar con rodeos, además. Yo no iba a abrir la boca como un perro para cazar moscas y luego cerrarla sin atrapar nada.

—Pues me parece que la señorita Nancy se está mostrando menos insensible con él —prosiguió Ben—, porque el señor Godfrey no parece tan desalentado en este momento. Veo que la va a llevar a sentarse, ahora que la danza ha terminado. Me parece realmente que eso se llama cortesía.

La razón por la cual Godfrey y Nancy habían salido del baile no era tan tierna como Ben se lo imaginaba. A causa de la aglomeración de las parejas, le había ocurrido un ligero accidente al vestido de Nancy. La falda, que era bastante corta de adelante para dejar ver el tobillo, era bastante larga por detrás como para caer bajo el peso majestuoso del pie del *squire*. Este accidente había ocasionado la rotura de algunos puntos en el talle de Nancy, así como una gran agitación en el espíritu de su hermana Priscila, como una inquietud seria en el de Nancy. Nuestro pensamiento puede absorberse en los conflictos del amor, pero rara vez llega esto a punto de hacerlo casi insensible a un cambio general de las cosas.

Nancy, apenas ejecutada la figura que bailaba con Godfrey, le dijo a éste sonrojándose profundamente que se veía obligada a ir a sentarse hasta que Priscila pudiera reunírsele; porque las dos hermanas ya habían cambiado una frase en voz baja y una mirada significativa.

Ninguna razón menos urgente que aquélla hubiera sido capaz de determinar a Nancy a darle a Godfrey aquella ocasión de estar solo con ella. En cuanto a Godfrey, se sentía tan feliz, estaba tan sumido en el olvido bajo el encanto prolongado de la contradanza que acababa de bailar con Nancy, que la confusión de la joven le dio bastante audacia como para querer llevarla directamente, sin pedirle permiso, al pequeño salón de al lado en que las mesas de juego estaban preparadas.

—¡Ah!, no, gracias —dijo Nancy fríamente, así que se dio cuenta a donde la llevaba—. Voy a esperar aquí hasta que Priscila pueda venir a buscarme. Siento haceros salir del baile y causaros una molestia.

—Pero allí estaréis completamente sola —respondió el astuto Godfrey—. Voy a dejaros allí hasta que llegue vuestra hermana.

Dijo aquellas palabras con acento indiferente.

Era una proposición agradable y exactamente lo que Nancy deseaba; entonces, ¿por qué se sintió algo ofendida de que el señor Godfrey se la dirigiera?

Entraron, y ella se sentó en una de las sillas contra las mesas de juego, considerando aquella posición como la más decente y la más inaccesible que pudiera escogerse.

—Gracias, señor —dijo la joven inmediatamente—. No quiero causaros más molestias. Siento que os haya tocado una compañera de tan poca suerte.

—Es una maldad de vuestra parte —dijo Godfrey, permaneciendo de pie junto a ella, sin manifestar la menor intención de partir— que deploréis el haber bailado conmigo.

—¡Oh!, no, señor, no tengo la intención de decir nada malo —replicó Nancy coqueteando y linda hasta hacer perder la cabeza—. Cuando los caballeros tienen tantas distracciones, una pieza de baile es bien poca cosa para ellos.

—Vos sabéis bien que no es así. Vos sabéis que bailar una pieza con vos me interesa más que todos los

otros placeres del mundo…

Hacía tiempo, mucho tiempo, que Godfrey no había expresado algo tan positivo. Nancy se estremeció. Pero su dignidad natural y su repugnancia instintiva a dejar traslucir ninguna emoción, la permitieron permanecer completamente tranquila en su silla. Solamente que fue en un tono algo más indeciso que dijo:

—No, realmente, señor Godfrey, no lo sé, y tengo muy buenas razones para pensar lo contrario; sin embargo, si es cierto, no deseo saberlo.

—¿No me perdonaréis entonces jamás, Nancy? ¿No tendréis nunca una buena opinión de mí, suceda lo que suceda? ¿No pensáis que el presente pueda llegar a rescatar el pasado aun cuando yo me corrigiese por completo y renunciara a todo lo que os desagrade?

Godfrey apenas tenía conciencia de que aquella ocasión inesperada de hablar con Nancy y a solas lo había puesto fuera de sí; y un sentimiento ciego se había apoderado de su lengua.

Nancy experimentó realmente una agitación extrema ante la posibilidad que sugerían las palabras de Godfrey. Sin embargo, la misma fuerza de aquella emoción que estaba en peligro de encontrar demasiado violenta, reanimó todo el imperio que la joven tenía sobre sí.

—Me sentiría muy feliz al ver en cualquier persona un cambio favorable, señor Godfrey —respondió con un cambio de tono apenas sensible—; pero más valdría, sin embargo, que ese cambio no fuera necesario.

—Sois muy cruel, Nancy —dijo Godfrey contrariado—. Podríais alentarme a volverme mejor. Me siento muy desgraciado; pero vos no tenéis corazón.

—Creo que tienen menos los que comienzan por proceder mal —respondió Nancy, dejando percibir de pronto y a pesar suyo un pequeño rasgo de indignación.

Godfrey quedó encantado con aquel leve arranque. Hubiera querido continuar para que Nancy se irritara contra él; era una tranquilidad y una firmeza tan exasperantes. Pero al fin y al cabo todavía no le era indiferente.

La entrada de Priscila, que se precipitó diciendo: «¡Dios mío! Dios, veamos, hija, qué tiene ese vestido», le quitó a Godfrey la esperanza de una querella.

—Supongo que ahora debo irme —le dijo a Priscila.

—A mí me es igual que os vayáis o que os quedéis —le respondió aquella franca señorita, a la vez que buscaba algo con precipitación en el bolsillo.

—Y vos, ¿deseáis que me vaya? —dijo Godfrey, mirando a Nancy, que estaba de pie junto a Priscila.

—Como gustéis —dijo Nancy, tratando de recobrar toda su frialdad, bajando atentamente la vista hacia el ruedo de su falda.

—Entonces, prefiero quedarme —prosiguió Godfrey, con la determinación irreflexiva de conseguir aquella noche tanta felicidad como pudiera, sin preocuparse del mañana.

XII

MIENTRAS GODFREY Cass bebía a grandes sorbos el dulce brebaje del olvido en presencia de Nancy y perdía voluntariamente todo recuerdo del vínculo secreto que en otros momentos lo obsesionaba y atormentaba, llegando hasta exasperarlo en medio de los rayos sonrientes del sol, su esposa se adelantaba a pasos lentos e inciertos, a través de las callejuelas cubiertas de nieve de Raveloe, llevando una criatura en los brazos.



Aquel viaje de la víspera del Año Nuevo era un acto de venganza premeditada que su corazón siempre había alimentado desde el día en que Godfrey, en un acceso de cólera, le había dicho que antes preferiría morir a reconocerla por su mujer. Debía haber una gran fiesta en la Casa Roja la víspera del Año Nuevo, ella lo sabía; su marido sonreiría y le sonreirían. Escondería la existencia de ella en el rincón más obscuro de su corazón. Pero ella iría a turbar su felicidad; iría cubierta de harapos sucios, con su rostro demacrado que antes no cedía en belleza a ninguno; iría con su hijo, que tenía los ojos y los cabellos de su padre, a declararle al *squire* que era la mujer de su hijo mayor.

Pocas veces los miserables pueden dejar de considerar su situación como un mal que le es infligido por aquéllos cuya miseria es menor. Molly sabía que si vestía harapos sucios no era por culpa de la negligencia de su marido, sino del demonio Opio, del que era esclava en cuerpo y alma, y sólo un resto de amor materno hacía que no sacrificara por completo al monstruo la vida de su hijo hambriento. Ella lo sabía muy bien, y, sin embargo; en los momentos en que su miserable conciencia no estaba amodorrada, el sentimiento de sus necesidades y de su degradación se transformaba continuamente en acritud contra Godfrey. Él vivía en la holgura, él, y si sus derechos de esposa fueran reconocidos, ella también viviría rodeada de comodidades. La convicción de que Godfrey estaba arrepentido de su casamiento y que sufría pensando cómo poderlo romper, apuraba el rencor de Molly.

Las reflexiones sanas que impulsan al culpable a censurarse interiormente no acuden con bastante energía, aun en el aire más puro y ante las mejores lecciones del cielo y de la tierra. ¿Cómo era posible que esas delicadas mensajeras de alas blancas pudieran llegar hasta la celda emocionada del corazón de aquella mujer, celda habitada sólo por recuerdos tan poco nobles como los de una moza de posada que sueña en su paraíso de antaño con sus cintas color de rosa y con las bromas de los señores?

Había partido temprano, pero se había retrasado en el camino. Su indolencia la disponía a creer que la nieve dejaría de caer si esperaba bajo un abrigo caliente. Se había detenido más tiempo del que pensaba, y ahora que la noche la había sorprendido en las largas callejuelas rugosas y cubiertas de nieve, ni siquiera el ardor de la venganza podía impedir que su coraje desmayara.

Eran las siete. En aquel momento no estaba muy lejos de Raveloe, pero aquellos senderos monótonos no le eran bastante familiares para saber qué próximo estaba el término de su viaje. Tenía necesidad de consuelo, pero no conocía más que uno; el demonio familiar oculto en su seno. Sin embargo, vaciló un momento antes de llevar a sus labios el resto que le quedaba de aquella substancia negra.

En ese instante el amor materno alzó su voz; antes un doloroso estado de conciencia que el olvido; antes la continuación del sufrimiento causado por la laxitud, que el amodorramiento de los brazos que la imposibilidad de seguir oprimiendo y sintiendo la preciosa carga. Algunos segundos más tarde Molly arrojó algo; no era la materia negra, era un frasco vacío. Prosiguió su camino bajo una nube negra que se desgarraba, por donde surgía de tiempo en tiempo la luz de una estrella que se velaba rápidamente porque se había levantado un viento glacial desde que dejara de caer la nieve. Pero Molly seguía caminando adormeciéndose cada vez más a cada paso que daba, oprimiendo al niño contra su seno con la inconsciencia cada vez mayor.

Lentamente y a su manera el demonio cumplía su obra. El frío y la fatiga le iban en ayuda. Muy luego Molly sólo sintió un deseo supremo e irresistible que le veló por completo el porvenir: el deseo imperioso de extenderse en el suelo y dormir. Había llegado en un sitio en que sus pasos ya no eran guiados por las cercas de las callejuelas, y vagó al azar, incapaz de distinguir ningún objeto a pesar de la inmensa capa blanca que la rodeaba y la creciente luz de las estrellas. Se dejó caer contra una mata aislada de retama. Era una almohada bastante blanda, y el lecho de nieve era también bastante suave. No se dio cuenta de la frialdad de aquella cama. No se preocupó de si la criatura despertaría y llamaría a su madre llorando. Sin embargo, los brazos seguían ejerciendo su presión instintiva y la pequeña criatura continuaba durmiendo tan tranquilamente como si estuviera mecida en una cuna guarnecida de encajes.

Por último llegó el anonadamiento completo; los dedos perdieron su fuerza; los brazos se distendieron. Entonces la pequeña cabeza rodó del seno en que estaba apoyada y los ojos azules se dilataron contemplando la fría luz de las estrellas. Primero la criatura exhaló el pequeño grito plañidero de «ma-ma», e hizo un esfuerzo para refugiarse en el brazo y el seno en que descansaba. De pronto, en que el pequeño ser rodaba de las rodillas de la madre, húmedas de nieve, una viva luz que reflejaba la blancura del suelo, atrajo su mirada. Con esa rapidez de transición característica en la infancia, su espíritu fue inmediatamente absorbido por la vista de aquella cosa brillante y animada que corría hacia ella sin alcanzarla nunca. Era preciso que atrapara aquella cosa brillante y animada. En un instante la pequeña criatura se deslizó con los pies y las manos y en seguida tendía una de aquéllas tratando de asir los rayos de luz. Pero los sutiles rayos

no quisieron dejarse aferrar y la pequeña cabeza se alzó para ver de dónde venían. Salían de un sitio muy brillante; entonces, el pequeño ser siguió sobre sus piernecitas y avanzó titubeando por la nieve, arrastrando tras de sí el chal en que había estado envuelto, mientras que su sombrero abollado caía a su espalda; así avanzó titubeando hacia la puerta abierta de la choza de Silas Marner, dirigiéndose derecho, al hogar caliente, en el que había un fuego vivo de leñas y astillas. El fuego había recalentado la vieja bolsa —el sobretodo de Silas— extendido sobre los ladrillos para que se secase. La criatura, acostumbrada a quedar sola largas horas sin que su madre reparase en ella, se sentó en el saco y extendió sus manecitas frente a la llama, llena de gusto, balbuceando y diciéndole largos discursos inarticulados al alegre fuego, como un patito recientemente nacido que comienza a encontrarse bien al sol. Entretanto, el calor no tardó en producir un efecto somnífero; la linda cabecita de cabellos rubios cayó sobre la vieja bolsa y los ojos azules fueron velados por sus párpados semitransparentes.

Pero ¿dónde se encontraba Marner en el momento en que aquella extraña visita acudía a su hogar? Estaba en la choza, pero no había visto a la criatura. Durante las pocas semanas que habían transcurrido desde que se cometiera el robo, había tomado la costumbre de abrir la puerta y de mirar de tiempo en tiempo hacia afuera, como si pensara que su plata había de volverle de un modo o de otro, o que algunos indicios, algunas noticias de su tesoro se encontraran misteriosamente en marcha y fueran susceptibles de ser apercibidos de los esfuerzos de su mirada o la intención de su oído. Era principalmente al caer la noche cuando no estaba ocupado con su telar, que se ponía a repetir aquel acto maquinal, al que hubiera sido incapaz de asignar un fin determinado y que no podía ser comprendido sino por aquellos que han sentido el dolor enloquecido de verse separados del objeto supremamente amado. En el crepúsculo de la tarde, y aun después, cuando la noche no era obscura, Silas miraba la breve perspectiva que rodeaba las canteras. Velaba y escuchaba atentamente, no con esperanza, pero sí con un deseo inquieto e irresistible.



Esa mañana, algunos de sus vecinos le habían dicho que era la víspera del Año Nuevo y que era preciso que esa noche velara para oír tocar la partida del año viejo y la llegada del nuevo, porque eso daba suerte y podría hacer volver su dinero. Aquélla no era más que una broma amistosa de los vecinos de Raveloe, para divertirse un poco de las singularidades medio insensatas de un avaro. Eso habría contribuido quizás a poner a Silas en un estado de agitación mayor que de costumbre. Desde el comienzo del crepúsculo abrió las puertas varias veces, pero para volverlas a cerrar inmediatamente cada vez al ver que toda perspectiva era velada por la caída de la nieve. Sin embargo, la última vez que la abrió ya no nevaba y las nubes se separaban de cuando en cuando.

Permaneció largo rato de pie observando y escuchando. Había entonces realmente algo en el camino, que se adelantaba hacia él, pero no pudo distinguir nada. La calma y la sábana inmensa de nieve y sin huellas parecían estrechar su soledad y su deseo inquieto rozaba en la desesperación. Entró de nuevo y tornó el pestillo de la puerta con la mano derecha para cerrar. No cerró; lo detuvo, como ya le había sucedido desde la desaparición de su tesoro, la varilla invisible de la catalepsia. Permaneció como una estatua tallada, con los ojos dilatados por la visión, manteniendo la puerta abierta, incapaz para resistir, sea al bien, sea al mal, que pudiera entrar en su casa.

Cuando Marner volvió en sí, prosiguió la acción suspendida y cerró la puerta, inconsciente de la ruptura de la ilación de sus ideas, inconsciente de que hubiera ocurrido ningún cambio, a no ser que la luz del día se había obscurecido y que se sentía helado y desfallecido. Se imaginó que había permanecido largo tiempo mirando hacia fuera. Se volvió hacia el hogar, en que los dos troncos de leña habían caído separándose y no esparciendo más que un fulgor rojizo y dudoso, y luego se sentó en su silla junto al fuego.

Tras de un rato, al agacharse a atizar las astillas, le pareció que sus ojos turbios veían en el suelo, delante del hogar, algo que tenía la apariencia de oro. ¡Del oro! —su oro— devuéltole tan misteriosamente como le había sido robado. Entonces sintió que su corazón se ponía a latir con violencia, y durante algunos instantes fue incapaz de avanzar la mano para tomar el oro recuperado. El montón de oro parecía brillar y crecer bajo su mirada agitada. Se inclinó por fin y tendió la mano hacia adelante, pero en lugar de las monedas duras de contorno familiar y resistente, sus dedos encontraron rizos sedosos y cálidos. En su extrema sorpresa Silas se dejó caer de rodillas y agachó profundamente la cabeza para examinar la maravilla: era una criatura dormida, una linda criatura regordeta, con la cabeza toda cubierta de rizos rubios y sedosos. ¿Era posible que fuera su hermanita que le volviera en su sueño, su hermanita que él había llevado en brazos durante un año, antes de que muriera, cuando él mismo sólo era un niño sin medias ni zapatos?

Tal fue la primera idea que se le ocurrió a Silas, estupefacto de sorpresa. Sin embargo, ¿era aquello un sueño? Se puso de pie, aproximó los tizones, y echando encima algunas virutas y hojas secas consiguió levantar llama, pero la llama no hizo desaparecer la visión: no hizo más que iluminar más distintamente la pequeña forma regordeta de la criatura, así como sus miserables ropas. Se parecía mucho a su hermanita. Silas se dejó caer desfallecido en la silla, bajo el doble golpe de una sorpresa inexplicable y de un torrente rápido de recuerdos.

¿Cómo y cuándo había podido entrar aquella criatura? Él no había salido más allá de la puerta. Pero junto con aquella pregunta, y apartándola casi por completo, nacía en su alma la visión de su antigua casa y la de las viejas calles que conducían al Patio de la Linterna. Y aquella visión contenía otra; la de los pensamientos que había tenido cuando ocurrieron aquellas escenas lejanas. Aquellos pensamientos le parecían extraños hoy, tal sucede con las antiguas amistades que es imposible hacer revivir. Sin embargo, tenía una vaga idea de que aquella criatura era en cierto modo un mensajero que le llegaba de aquella vida del tiempo antiguo. Aquel pequeño ser reanimaba fibras que habían permanecido insensibles en Raveloe; antiguos estremecimientos de ternura, antiguas impresiones del temor respetuoso causado por el presentimiento de que algún poder presidía su destino; porque su imaginación no se había desprendido todavía del sentimiento misterioso producido en él por la presencia brusca de la criatura, no habiendo supuesto ninguna causa ordinaria y natural que hubiera podido producir el suceso.


J. Hoffmeister 07

Pero un grito se hizo oír frente al hogar. Marner se inclinó para tomar la criatura sobre sus rodillas. Ésta se agarró a su cuello y lanzó con una fuerza cada vez mayor esos gritos inarticulados, mezclados con la palabra «ma-ma» por medio de los cuales los niños expresan su perplejidad al despertar. Silas la oprimió contra su corazón, y profirió casi inconscientemente voces cariñosas para calmarla. Al mismo tiempo le ocurrió que una parte de su sopa, que se había enfriado junto al fuego moribundo, podría servir de alimento a la criatura, con tal que hiciera calentarla un poco.

Tuvo mucho que hacer durante la hora siguiente. La sopa, endulzada con un poco de azúcar procedente de una antigua provisión que se había abstenido de usar para él, detuvo los gritos de la pequeña, hizo alzar los ojos azules hacia Silas y contemplarlo con una larga mirada tranquila cuando le puso la cuchara en la boca. En seguida se deslizó de las rodillas de Marner al suelo y se puso a andar de aquí para allá, a pasitos cortos, pero titubeando tan graciosamente que Silas se levantó de golpe para seguirla, de miedo que fuera a golpearse contra algo que le hiriera. Pero sólo cayó sentada, y allí, con la cara llorosa y mirando a Marner; se puso a tirar de los zapatitos como si le hicieran daño. El tejedor volvió a tomarla en las rodillas. Sin embargo, sólo fue un rato después que al espíritu lento del solterón Silas se le ocurrió que eran los zapatos mojados los que causaban el dolor de la criatura, apretándole los tobillos recalentados. Le quitó los zapatos con dificultad y Bebé se ocupó inmediatamente con delicia del misterio de sus zapatitos, todavía nuevos para ella, invitando a Marner, con muchas carcajadas alegres y sofocadas, a que considerara él también el misterio. Los zapatos mojados le sugirieron, por fin, a Silas, la idea de que Bebé había caminado en la nieve. Esta circunstancia le recordó que no había pensado en ningún medio natural para hacer entrar o traer la criatura en la casa. Bajo la impresión de este nuevo pensamiento, y sin detenerse a formar conjeturas la tomó en los brazos y se dirigió hacia la puerta. En seguida que la abrió, la pequeña repitió de nuevo el grito de «ma-ma», que Silas no le había oído hasta el momento en que el hambre la despertó. Agachándose pudo distinguir las huellas de los pequeños pies en la nieve inmaculada, y siguió su rastro hasta las matas de retama. «¡Ma-ma!», repitió la criatura varias veces, echándose hacia adelante, como para escapar de los brazos del tejedor antes de que éste, que tenía un arbusto por delante, viera que había allí un cuerpo humano, cuya cabeza estaba profundamente hundida entre las ramas y a medias recubierta por la nieve levantada por el viento.



XIII

LA CENA, que comenzara temprano en la Casa Roja, había terminado, y la fiesta había llegado en ese momento en que la misma timidez se convierte en alegría natural, el momento en que los señores que tienen conciencia de sus extraordinarios talentos acaban por dejarse persuadir de que deben bailar un «hornpipe».

Era también la hora en que el *squire* prefería hablar en voz alta, repartir rapé y palmear las espaldas de los invitados a seguir sentado frente a la mesa de «whist». Esta preferencia exasperaba al tío Kimble que, estando siempre alegre en las horas de los negocios serios, se ponía grave y hasta violento cuando se trataba de jugar y beber aguardiente. Barajaba entonces los naipes antes de la jugada de su adversario con una mirada irritada y recelosa, y volvía un triunfo pequeño con un aire de aversión inexpresable como si en el mundo en que tales cosas se producen no valiera más echarlo todo al diablo… Cuando la fiesta había llegado a ese grado de libertad y animación, era costumbre que los servidores, después de haber terminado el servicio pesado de la cena, tuvieran su parte de diversión y vinieran a mirar el baile, de modo que las piezas del fondo de la casa quedaban solitarias.

Dos puertas ponían en comunicación el vestíbulo del salón blanco. Se las había dejado abiertas las dos para tener aire; pero la del fondo estaba obstruida por los servidores y los vecinos del pueblo; sólo la primera había quedado libre. Bob Cass ejecutaba las figuras de un «hornpipe». Muy orgulloso con la agilidad de su hijo, el *squire* declaró repetidas veces que Bob era exactamente lo que había sido él en su juventud, con un tono de voz que implicaba que aquella habilidad era el rasgo supremo de mérito en la mocedad. Se encontraba en el centro de un grupo que se había situado frente al ejecutante, bastante cerca de la primera puerta.

Godfrey estaba inmediato, no para admirar el talento de su hermano, pero sí para no perder de vista a Nancy, que estaba sentada en el grupo cerca del señor Lammeter. Se mantenía apartado porque quería evitar las bromas paternales del *squire* sobre la belleza de la señorita Nancy y sobre el matrimonio en general, bromas que probablemente iban a volverse cada vez más explícitas. Además tenía la perspectiva de bailar otra vez con ella cuando terminara el «hornpipe». Mientras tanto le era muy agradable a Godfrey el poderle dirigir a Nancy largas miradas sin ser observado por nadie.

Entretanto, al alzar los ojos, después de una larga mirada, su vista encontró un objeto que en aquel momento le hizo estremecer tanto como si fuera una aparición de ultratumba. Era realmente una aparición de esa vida oculta y situada como un pasaje obscuro tras de una fachada adornada con elegancia que recibe la luz del sol y las miradas de los honorables visitantes. Era su propia hija en los brazos de Silas Marner.

Tal fue su impresión inmediata e indudable, bien que no hubiera visto a su hija desde hacía varios meses. Pero en el momento en que comenzaba a concebir una vaga esperanza de que quizás se había equivocado, el señor Crackenthorp y el señor Lammeter, sorprendidos por aquella extraña visita, ya se habían adelantado hacia Silas. Godfrey se les reunió en seguida, incapaz de permanecer quieto y sin recoger la menor palabra. Trataba de dominarse; sin embargo, tenía conciencia de que, si era observado, no dejarían de notar su agitación y la palidez de sus labios.

Pero en aquel momento todos los que estaban en la entrada de la sala tenían los ojos fijos en Silas. El propio *squire* se había puesto de pie y le preguntaba con acento irritado:

—¿Qué pasa? ¿Qué significa esto? ¿Por qué entráis aquí de esa manera?



—He venido a buscar al doctor; necesito ver al doctor —le dijo Silas—; ante todo, al señor Crackenthorp.

—¿Qué sucede, Marner? —dijo el pastor—. El doctor está aquí; pero antes decid tranquilamente para qué lo necesitáis.

—Es para una mujer —contestó Silas con voz baja y casi sin resuello, precisamente en el momento en que Godfrey se le acercaba—. Está muerta, me parece… muerta entre la nieve… en las canteras… cerca de mi puerta.

Godfrey sintió que el corazón le latía con violencia. Había en aquel momento un terror en su alma: era que la mujer no estuviera realmente muerta; terror culpable, huésped demasiado odioso para que encontrara refugio en el alma buena de Godfrey. Pero la naturaleza de ningún hombre puede protegerlo contra los malos deseos, cuando su dicha depende de la duplicidad.

—Bueno, bueno —dijo el señor Crackenthorp—, salid al vestíbulo. Yo voy a ir a buscar al doctor. Ha encontrado, una mujer en la nieve y cree que está muerta —agregó en voz baja al *squire*—. Vale más hablar de esto lo menos posible; molestaría a las damas. Decidles solamente que una pobre mujer sufre del frío y hambre. Voy a buscar a Kimble.

Entretanto, las damas se habían adelantado ya curiosas por saber qué habría podido llevar allí al solitario tejedor en circunstancias tan extrañas e interesándose por la preciosa criatura. Ésta, medio atraída y medio alarmada por la brillante iluminación y la numerosa sociedad, fruncía el ceño y se cubría la cara a su alrededor, hasta que el fruncimiento de cejas, contraídas por un contacto o una palabra de cariño, le hiciera ocultar su rostro con nueva resolución.

—¿Qué criatura es ésa? —dijeron varias damas a la vez, entre otras Nancy Lammeter, que se dirigía a Godfrey.

—No lo sé; creo que es la hija de una pobre mujer que han encontrado entre la nieve —fue la respuesta que Godfrey se arrancó del corazón con terrible esfuerzo.

—Al fin y al cabo, ¿estoy cierto? —se apresuró a decirse a sí mismo, para tranquilizar su conciencia.

—Entonces haríais bien en bajar la criatura aquí —dijo la excelente señora Kimble, vacilando, sin embargo, en poner en contacto las ropas manchadas de la niña con su bata de raso—. Voy a decirle a una de las sirvientas que venga a tomarla.

—No, no, no puedo separarme de ella; no puedo darla —dijo Silas bruscamente—. Vino espontáneamente hacia mí; tengo el derecho de guardarla.

Esta proposición de sacarle la criatura había sido dirigida a Silas sin que él la esperara absolutamente, y aquellas palabras, pronunciadas bajo la influencia de la impulsión fuerte y brusca, fueron casi como una revelación que se hizo a sí mismo. Un minuto antes no tenía ninguna intención precisa respecto a la criatura.

—¿Habéis oído nunca cosa semejante? —le dijo la señora Kimble, algo sorprendida, a su vecina.

—Ahora, señoras, os ruego que me dejéis pasar —dijo el doctor Kimble, saliendo de la sala de juego, bastante fastidiado por la interrupción; pero estaba avezado por el largo ejercicio de su profesión a obedecer a los llamados desagradables, aun cuando había bebido con exceso.

—Qué fastidio, Kimble, el tener que salir en este momento, ¿eh? —dijo el *squire*—. Bien podía haber ido a buscar a vuestro ayudante, el aprendiz… ¿Cómo se llama?

—¿Hubiera podido?, ¡pero para qué decir que hubiera podido! —gruñó el tío Kimble, apresurándose a salir junto con Marner, seguido por el señor Crackenthorp y por Godfrey.

—¿Queréis buscarme un par de zapatos gruesos, Godfrey? Pero, esperad… que vaya alguien corriendo a casa de Winthrop a buscar a Dolly; es la mejor mujer que puede darse. Ben estaba aquí antes de la cena, ¿se ha marchado ya?

—Sí, señor, me he cruzado con él —dijo Marner—; pero no tuve tiempo de detenerme a decirle otra cosa sino que iba en busca del doctor, y él me respondió que éste estaba en casa del *squire*. Me eché entonces a correr, y como al llegar no encontré a nadie en los fondos de la casa, me dirigí donde la sociedad estaba reunida.

La niña, cuya atención no era ya distraída por el brillo de las luces y las caras sonrientes de las damas, se puso a llorar y a llamar «ma-ma», bien que se prendiera siempre de Marner, que parecía haberse captado por completo su confianza. Godfrey había vuelto con el calzado. Al oír los gritos de la niña su corazón se oprimió, como si alguna fibra íntima se hubiera tendido con fuerza.

—Voy a ir —dijo precipitadamente, impaciente por moverse un poco—, voy a ir a buscar esa mujer, a la señora Winthrop.

—¡Oh!, ¡bah!, mandad a otra persona —dijo el tío Kimble, que se apresuró a salir con Marner.

—Hacedme saber si puedo ser útil para algo, Kimble —dijo el señor Crackenthorp.

Pero el doctor ya estaba demasiado lejos para que pudiera oírlo.

También Godfrey había desaparecido. Había ido rápidamente a buscar su sombrero y su sobretodo, conservando sólo la presencia de espíritu necesaria para darse cuenta de que no debía pasar por un insensato; pero se lanzó a caminar en la nieve sin preocuparse de su calzado de baile.

Minutos después se dirigía rápidamente a las canteras en compañía de Dolly. A la vez que pensara que era muy natural que ella misma desafiara el frío y la nieve a fin de ir a hacer una obra de misericordia, aquella mujer estaba, sin embargo, muy afligida al ver a un joven que se mojaba los pies por obedecer una impulsión semejante.

—Haríais mucho mejor en volveros, señor —dijo Dolly con compasión respetuosa—. No tenéis para qué tomar frío. Pero os diría que de paso le dijerais a mi marido que venga; está en el *Arco Iris*, creo; si es que os parece que no ha bebido demasiado para poder ser útil. En ese caso, la señora Snell podría mandarnos a su pequeño sirviente para hacer los mandados, pues probablemente habrá que ir a buscar algo a casa del médico.

—No; ahora que he salido no me volveré; voy a quedarme aquí afuera —dijo Godfrey, cuando llegaron frente a la posada de Marner—. Podéis venir a decirme si puedo servir para algo.

—En verdad, señor, que sois muy bueno; tenéis un corazón tierno —dijo Dolly, dirigiéndose hacia la puerta.

Godfrey estaba demasiado penosamente preocupado para sentir algún remordimiento por aquel elogio inmerecido. Iba y venía sin darse cuenta de que se hundía hasta los tobillos en la nieve. No tenía conciencia de nada, a no ser de la agitación febril causada por su incertidumbre respecto a lo que pasaba en la choza y de la influencia que cada uno de los desenlaces tendría sobre su destino futuro. No; no estaba por completo sin conciencia de otra cosa más. En lo profundo de su corazón y medio sofocado por el deseo apasionado y el temor, estaba el sentimiento de que no debía esperar aquellos desenlaces, que tendría que aceptar las consecuencias de sus actos, reconocer a su mísera esposa y devolver sus derechos a su hija abandonada. Sin embargo, no tenía bastante valor moral para encarar la posibilidad de renunciar voluntariamente a Nancy. Tenía sólo bastante conciencia y corazón para estar constantemente atormentado por la debilidad que le impedía ese renunciamiento. Y en aquel instante su espíritu se libertaba de toda traba y se exaltaba con la perspectiva imprevista de verse libre de su larga esclavitud.

—¿Habrá muerto? —decía la voz que predominaba en su corazón sobre las demás—. Si ha muerto me podré casar con Nancy; entonces, seré una buena persona en el porvenir y no tendré más secretos. En cuanto a la criatura, se cuidará de ella de un modo o de otro.

Pero en medio de esta visión se presentaba la otra alternativa:

—Vive, quizá; en este caso, ¡pobre de mí!

Godfrey no supo jamás cuánto tiempo transcurrió hasta que se abrió la puerta de la choza y salió el doctor Kimble. Se adelantó hacia su tío. Acababa de prepararse para dominar la emoción que no dejaría de sentir, cualesquiera que fuesen las noticias que iba a saber…

—Os estaba esperando, puesto que vine hasta aquí —dijo anticipándose al doctor.

—¡Bah!, es un absurdo que hayáis salido; ¿por qué no mandasteis uno de los sirvientes? No hay nada que hacer… está muerta… muerta desde hace varias horas, creo.

—¿Qué clase de mujer es? —dijo Godfrey, sintiendo que la sangre le subía a la cara.

—Una mujer joven, pero demacrada, con largos cabellos negros. Alguna vagabunda… toda cubierta de harapos; tiene, sin embargo, en un dedo una alianza. Mañana van a llevarla al asilo de los pobres. Bueno, vamos.

—Deseo verla —dijo Godfrey—. Creo que ayer vi una mujer como ésa. Os alcanzaré dentro de un minuto o dos.

El señor Kimble siguió su camino y Godfrey se volvió a la choza. Sólo echó una mirada sobre el rostro inanimado que descansaba sobre la almohada, rostro que Dolly había arreglado de un modo conveniente. Pero se le grabó de tal modo aquella última mirada lanzada sobre la esposa detestada que, diez y seis años después, cada uno de los rasgos de la fisonomía marchita estaba aún presente en su espíritu, cuando contó en todos sus detalles la historia de aquella noche.

Se volvió inmediatamente hacia la estufa, donde Silas Marner estaba meciendo a la niña. Ahora estaba muy tranquila, pero no dormía. Estaba sólo apaciguada por la sopa azucarada y por el calor. Sus ojos habían tomado esa expresión serena que nos da a los humanos de más edad, presa de agitaciones interiores, un cierto respeto mezclado de terror cuando estamos en presencia de una criatura. Tal es el sentimiento que

experimentamos al contemplar alguna belleza tranquila y majestuosa del cielo y de la tierra, un planeta que brilla apaciblemente, un rosal en plena floración o bien la bóveda formada por los árboles encima de un sendero silencioso. Los ojos azules, muy abiertos, miraban los de Godfrey sin ninguna timidez ni signo de reconocerle. La criatura no podía hacer ningún llamado visible ni inteligible a su padre, y éste se encontró bajo la impresión de una extraña mezcla de sentimientos; de un conflicto de pesares y de alegrías viendo en aquel pequeño corazón que no respondía con ningún latido a la ternura medio celosa del suyo, mientras que los ojos azules se alejaban de los de él y se fijaban en la extraña cara del tejedor. Habiéndose inclinado mucho Marner para mirarlos, la pequeña mano se puso a tirarle la mejilla flácida y a deformarla con delicia.

—¿Vais a llevar mañana la niña al asilo de los pobres? —preguntó Godfrey, hablando con toda la indiferencia que le era posible.

—¿Quién ha dicho eso? —respondió Marner bruscamente—. ¿Me obligarán a llevarla?

—¡Cómo!, ¿vos querríais guardarla… un viejo soltero como vos?

—Hasta que me demuestren que tienen el derecho de quitármela, la guardaré —dijo Marner—. La madre ha muerto y supongo que no tiene padre: está sola en el mundo. Mi plata se fue a dar no sé dónde… No sé nada… Casi ni sé dónde estoy.

—¡Pobre criatura! —dijo Godfrey—. Dejadme que os dé algo para comprarle ropas.

Acababa de llevarse la mano al bolsillo y de sacar media guinea. La colocó en la mano de Silas y se apresuró a salir de la choza para alcanzar al señor Kimble.

—No; esa mujer no es la que encontré —dijo cuando se le reunió—. La niña es preciosa; parece que el viejo la quiere guardar; es extraño en un avaro como él. Le he dado una bagatela para ayudarlo. No es probable que la parroquia se empeñe en querer quitársela.

—No; sin embargo, hubo un tiempo en que yo se la hubiera disputado a Marner; pero ahora es demasiado tarde. Si la niña se cayera sobre el fuego, vuestra tía es demasiado gruesa para socorrerla; no podría más que quedar sentada y gruñir como una cerda asustada. Pero ¡qué loco sois, Godfrey, en salir así con medias y zapatos de baile, vos, uno de los elegantes de la fiesta y de una fiesta que se da en vuestra casa! ¿Qué significan estos arranques? ¿Se ha mostrado cruel la señorita Nancy y queréis contrariarla estropeando vuestros carpines?

—¡Oh!, todo ha sido desagradable para mí esta noche. Estaba harto de saltar en el baile y de mostrarme amable y de soportar exigencias a propósito de los «hornpipes». Y todavía tenía que bailar con la señorita Gunn —dijo Godfrey aprovechando el subterfugio que su tío le había sugerido.

Las escapatorias y las mentiras inocentes causan en los corazones que ambicionan conservarse puros una mortificación igual a la que causan a un gran pintor los toques falsos que sólo su ojo sabe descubrir. Pero son tan livianos como un simple adorno una vez que los actos se han vuelto mentirosos.

Godfrey reapareció en el salón blanco con los pies secos, y, puesto que hay que decir la verdad, con un sentimiento de alivio y de alegría, sentimiento demasiado intenso para que los pensamientos dolorosos pudieran combatirlo. Porque, ¿no podía ahora arriesgarse cuantas veces se le presentara la ocasión de decirle las cosas más tiernas a Nancy Lammeter, prometerle, así como él mismo, que sería siempre lo que ella quisiera? No había algún peligro de que su finada esposa fuera reconocida. No era una época de activas pesquisas y de grandes rumores públicos; y, en cuanto al acta de su casamiento, estaba muy lejos, escondida en páginas que nadie hojeaba; que nadie, excepto él, tenía interés en consultar. Dunsey, si reaparecía, sería capaz de traicionarlo; pero se podía comprar el silencio a Dunsey.

Y cuando los acontecimientos resultan tanto más felices para un hombre cuanto mayor ha sido la razón para tenerlos, ¿no es esa una prueba de que su conducta ha sido mucho menos censurable de lo que hubiera podido parecer de otro modo? Cuando somos bien tratados por la suerte, se nos ocurre naturalmente la idea de que no estamos del todo exentos de mérito; y que es razonable que la usemos bien en nuestro favor, sin echar a perder la feliz coyuntura. ¿Dónde estaría, por otra parte, para Godfrey, la utilidad de confesarle su pasado a Nancy y alejar de él la felicidad, más aún, de alejar la felicidad de Nancy, porque tenía, casi la certeza de ser amado? En cuanto a la criatura, velaría porque se la cuidara, haría todo por ella, excepto reconocerla. Quizá así fuera igualmente feliz en la vida, puesto que nadie podía decir cómo se desenvolverían las cosas, y, ¿se necesita otra razón más?, pues bien, que el padre sería mucho más feliz si no confesaba la paternidad.

XIV

EN RAVELOE hubo en esa semana el entierro de una persona pobre; y en la callejuela Kench, en Batterley, se supo que la madre de la criatura rubia, la mujer de cabellos negros que había ido recientemente a vivir allí, se había marchado. No se hizo ninguna otra observación particular con motivo de la desaparición de Molly de la vista de los hombres. Pero esta muerte no llorada, que, para la suerte de la humanidad, parecía tan insignificante como la caída de una hoja de estío, estaba cargada con la fuerza del destino para ciertas almas que conocemos, y debía crear las alegrías y las tristezas de toda la vida.

La resolución de Silas Marner de guardar la hija de la «vagabunda» fue un acto que no sorprendió menos a la gente de la aldea que el robo de su dinero, y las conversaciones versaron con frecuencia sobre este asunto. Al cambio de los sentimientos del público a su respecto, que debía a su desgracia, a las sospechas y a la aversión que se habían transformado en una piedad bastante despreciativa para un ser aislado y débil de espíritu como aquél, venía ahora a agregarse una simpatía más activa, principalmente por parte de las mujeres. Las buenas madres, que sabían el trabajo de conservar a las criaturas sanas y lindas; las madres indolentes, que conocían el fastidio de ser molestadas, cuando se cruzaban los brazos o se rascaban los codos por las predisposiciones de los chicos, que sólo empiezan a mantenerse firmes en las piernas, se tomaban el mismo interés que hacer conjeturas. Se preguntaban cómo se las iba a componer un hombre solo con una criatura de dos años en los brazos y estaban igualmente dispuestas a sugerirle a Marner buenos consejos. Las buenas madres le hablaban, sobre todo, de lo que sería preferible que hiciera y las madres indolentes le decían con insistencia lo que no conseguiría nunca hacer.

Entre las buenas madres, Dolly Winthrop era aquélla cuyos buenos servicios aceptaba Silas de mejor grado porque se los prestaba sin ostentación. Silas le había mostrado la media guinea de Godfrey y le había preguntado cómo podría arreglarse para comprarle ropas a la criatura.

—¡Ah!, maese Marner —dijo Dolly—, no tenéis necesidad de comprarle más que un par de zapatos; tengo las enaguas que Aarón llevaba hace cinco años, y no valdría la pena emplear el dinero en comprar ropas de criatura, porque la niña —que Dios la bendiga— va a crecer como la hierba en el mes de mayo, podéis estar cierto.



El mismo día, Dolly llevó un paquete y extendió delante de Marner las ropitas una por una en su orden natural de sucesión. La mayor parte estaba zurcida y remendada, pero muy limpita y agradable, como las plantas que comienzan a crecer. Esto sirvió de introducción a una gran ceremonia practicada con agua y jabón, de la que la criatura salió revestida con una nueva belleza. Sentada en seguida en las rodillas de Dolly la niñita comenzó a jugar con los pies, a acariciarse las manitas o a golpearlas la una contra la otra, pareciendo haber hecho varios descubrimientos en sí misma que expresaba por medio de sonidos alternados el «gug, gug, gag» y de «ma-ma», no era el grito de la necesidad ni el del malestar. Bebé se había acostumbrado a pronunciar, sin esperar a que se le respondiera con una palabra o un gesto de cariño.

—Nadie podría creer que los ángeles sean más lindos en el cielo —dijo Dolly, acariciándola y besándole los rizos rubios—. ¡Y decir que estaba cubierta con esos harapos sucios y que su pobre madre murió de frío! Pero está Aquel que cuidó de ella y la trajo a vuestro umbral, señor Marner. La puerta estaba abierta y ella entró pasando por la nieve, como un petirrojo muerto de frío y de hambre. ¿No me dijisteis que la puerta estaba abierta?



—Sí —dijo Silas con aire pensativo—, sí; la puerta estaba abierta. El dinero se me fue no sé dónde, y esta niña me vino no sé cómo.

Marner no le había dicho a nadie que ignoraba cómo había entrado la niña. Retrocedía ante las preguntas que podrían conducir al hecho que él mismo suponía, es decir, que había sido presa de una de sus crisis.

—¡Ah! —dijo Dolly con dulce gravedad—, es como la noche y la mañana, el sueño y la vigilia, la lluvia y la cosecha; una cosa se va, la otra viene, y nosotros no sabemos ni cómo ni cuándo. Podemos trabajar con tesón, luchar y sufrir; pero nuestra labor es bien insignificante al fin y al cabo; las grandes cosas vienen y se van sin esfuerzo de nuestra parte; sí, no cabe dudarlo. Sin embargo, yo creo que hacéis bien en quedaros con la criatura, maese Marner, puesto que os ha sido enviada, aunque haya personas que no sean de este parecer. Os incomodará un poco quizá mientras sea pequeña; pero yo vendré con gusto y la cuidaré en vuestro lugar. Siempre dispongo de un rato todos los días; porque, cuando se madruga, el reloj parece detenerse a eso de las diez antes de que llegue el momento de ir a buscar las provisiones. De modo que, os lo repito, vendré a cuidar a la niña en vuestro lugar, con mucho gusto.

—Muchísimas gracias… —dijo Silas vacilando un poco—. Os agradeceré mucho que me digáis lo que debo hacer.

Después, mientras se inclinaba hacia adelante para mirar a la niña —no sin un poco de celos—, y ésta echaba la cabeza contra el brazo de Dolly y observaba de lejos a Silas con satisfacción, el tejedor agregó con aire inquieto:

—Pero deseo atender yo mismo a la niña. De otro modo podría querer más a otra persona y no acostumbrarse a mí. He estado acostumbrado a hacer todo en mi casa; puedo aprender, aprenderé.

—¡Ah! Seguramente —dijo Dolly con voz suave—. He visto hombres muy hábiles para atender las criaturas. Los hombres son casi siempre torpes y testarudos —que Dios los ayude—; sin embargo, cuando no están ebrios no carecen de sentimientos, aunque no sepan poner vendas ni sanguijuelas: son demasiado bruscos e impacientes. Fijaos, primero se pone esto sobre el cuerpo —prosiguió Dolly, tomando una camisita y poniéndosela a la niña.

—Sí —dijo Marner dócilmente, mirando de muy cerca, a fin de iniciar sus ojos en los misterios.

Después, la nena le tomó la cabeza entre sus bracitos y le puso sus pequeños labios contra el rostro, haciéndole caricias.

—Ya lo veis —dijo Dolly con el tacto delicado de una mujer—, a vos es a quien quiere más. Quiere que la toméis sobre las rodillas, estoy segura. Vamos, linda, vamos. Tomadla, maese Marner; ponedle las ropitas; después podréis decir que hicisteis todo lo preciso por ella, desde su principio.

Marner la tomó sobre las rodillas, temblando con una emoción misteriosa para él, emoción causada por algo desconocido que comenzaba a apuntar en su existencia.

Sus pensamientos y sus sentimientos eran tan confusos que, si hubiera tratado de expresarlos, sólo hubiese podido decir que la niña le había venido en lugar de su dinero, que su oro se había vuelto una criatura.

Tomó las ropas de manos de Dolly y, bajo su dirección, se las puso a la niña. Ésta interrumpió entonces, naturalmente, sus ejercicios gimnásticos.

—¡Ya lo veis!, os desempeñáis a maravilla, maese Marner —dijo Dolly—; sin embargo, ¿qué vais a hacer cuando estéis obligado a permanecer sentado en vuestro telar? Porque se va a volver más movediza y traviesa de día en día, seguramente, que Dios la bendiga. Es una suerte que tengáis este hogar elevado en vez de una parrilla; el fuego está así menos a su alcance; sin embargo, si tenéis algo que pueda derramarse o romperse o lastimarle los dedos, en seguida tratará de agarrarlo, y es razonable que estéis advertido.

Silas, quedando algo perplejo, reflexionó un instante.

—La ataré al pie del telar —dijo por fin—; la ataré con una faja larga y sólida.

—Bueno, quizá eso baste, porque es una niña, porque es más fácil persuadir a las niñas que se queden quietas que a los varones. Yo sé cómo son éstos; he tenido cuatro —sí, cuatro, sábelo Dios—, y si se los ocurriera atarlos se agitarían y gritarían como los cerdos cuando se les pone un anillo en el hocico. Pero os traeré mi sillita con unos retazos de tela colorada y otros chiches para que pueda jugar con ellos. Se sentará y les hablará como si estuvieran vivos. ¡Ah!, si no fuera un pecado querer ver los hijos de otro modo que como son —que Dios los bendiga—, hubiera deseado que uno de ellos fuera mujer; y decir que hubiera podido enseñarle a zurcir, a remendar, a tejer y muchas otras cosas. Pero, en fin, podré enseñarle eso a esta niña cuando sea más grande, ¿no es cierto, maese Marner?

—Pero será mía y no de otros —dijo Marner con bastante vivacidad.

—Sí, naturalmente, tenéis el derecho de guardarla si sois para ella un padre y la criáis como conviene. Sin embargo —agregó Dolly llegando a un punto que había resuelto tocar de antemano—, tenéis que criarla como los hijos de las gentes bautizadas, llevarla a la iglesia y hacerle aprender el catecismo. Mi pequeño Aarón puede repetirlo perfectamente; os reza el credo y lo demás así como los mandamientos, lo mismo que si fuera un niño del coro. Eso es lo que tenéis que hacer, maese Marner, si queréis cumplir con vuestro deber para con esta huerfanita.

El pálido rostro de Marner se sonrojó súbitamente bajo la influencia de aquella nueva ansiedad. Su espíritu estaba harto preocupado, tratando de darle una explicación definida a las palabras de Dolly, para que pensara en contestarle.

—Creo —agregó la buena mujer— que esta pobre criatura no ha sido nunca bautizada y es conveniente advertir al pastor. En caso de que no tengáis nada que observar le hablaré de eso hoy mismo al señor Macey. Porque si la criatura acabara mal por una razón o por la otra y vos no hubierais cumplido con vuestro deber para con ella, maese Marner —si descuidarais de hacerla vacunar u omitierais cualquier otra cosa para preservarla del mal—, eso vendría a ser una espina en vuestro lecho mientras estuvierais de este lado del sepulcro. Yo no creo que le sea fácil a ningún hombre el poder descansar tranquilo en el otro mundo, si no ha llenado su deber para con las criaturas infortunadas que le han tocado en suerte sin haberlas pedido.

La propia Dolly estaba dispuesta a guardar silencio durante un tiempo, porque aquellas palabras brotaban de las profundidades de su sencilla creencia y estaba ansiosa por saber si producirían en Silas el efecto deseado. Éste estaba confuso e inquieto, porque aquellas palabras de Dolly de que «la niña no había sido bautizada» no tenían sentido claro para él. No conocía más que el bautismo de los adultos y nunca había oído hablar del bautismo de los niños.

—¿Qué quieren decir vuestras palabras de que la niña no ha sido nunca bautizada? —dijo al fin con timidez—. ¿Las personas no serán buenas con ella si no hace eso?

—¡Dios mío! ¡Dios mío, maese Marner! —dijo Dolly con el tono dulce de la compasión—, ¿no habéis tenido nunca padre ni madre que os hayan enseñado a rezar y que hay palabras buenas y buenas cosas para preservarnos del mal?

—Sí —dijo Silas en voz baja—; sé muchas cosas a ese respecto, a lo menos sabía muchas. Pero nuestros hábitos son diferentes: mi país queda muy lejos de aquí.

Se detuvo unos instantes; después agregó con tono más firme:

—Sin embargo, deseo hacer todo lo posible en favor de la criatura. Todo lo que sea conveniente para ella y que juzguéis sea bueno, no dejaré de conformarme a ello, si vos queréis decírmelo.

—Pues bien, entonces, maese Marner, voy a pedirle al señor Macey que le hable al pastor; y tendréis que decidiros por un nombre, porque será preciso dárselo a la niña cuando se la bautice.

—El nombre de mi madre era Hephtsiba —dijo Silas—, y mi hermanita llevaba su nombre.

—Pero es un nombre difícil de pronunciar —dijo Dolly—, y no estoy segura que sea un nombre de bautismo.

—Es un nombre que se encuentra en la Biblia —dijo Silas, volviéndole a la memoria sus antiguas ideas.

—Entonces no tengo ninguna razón para oponerme —repuso Dolly algo asustada por los conocimientos de Silas en este capítulo—; sin embargo, qué queréis, yo soy poco instruida y me cuesta comprender las palabras. Mi marido dice que yo ando siempre como si diera una en el clavo y tres en la herradura —eso es lo que dice, porque es muy sutil—, que Dios lo ayude. Pero no sería cómodo llamar a vuestra hermanita con un nombre tan difícil de pronunciar cuando no teníais nada importante que decirle, me parece a mí, ¿no es cierto, maese Marner?

—La llamábamos Eppie —respondió Silas.

—Pues bien, siempre que no sea malo acortar el nombre sería mucho más cómodo. Entonces, voy a marcharme, maese Marner, y hablaré del bautismo antes de la noche. Os deseo mucha suerte y tengo confianza en que así será, si cumplís con vuestro deber para con la pequeña huérfana… Además, hay que pensar en hacerla vacunar. En cuanto al lavado de sus ropitas, no tenéis que dirigiros sino a mí, porque puedo hacer eso sin esfuerzo cuando preparo la lejía. ¡Ah!, querido angelito. Me permitiréis que traiga a mi pequeño Aarón uno de estos días; le mostrará el carrito que su padre le ha fabricado y el perrito negro y blanco que está criando.

La niña fue, pues, bautizada, habiendo decidido el pastor que un doble bautismo era el riesgo menos grande que se podía correr. Con este motivo, Silas, después de vestirse lo más limpio y elegante que pudo, apareció por primera vez en la iglesia y tomó parte en las prácticas que sus vecinos consideraban como sagradas.

Le era imposible, según todo lo que veía y oía, identificar su antigua fe con la religión de Raveloe. Si hubiera sido capaz de ello en lo pasado, hubiese sido bajo la influencia de un sentimiento intenso, pronto a vibrar con simpatía antes que por medio de una comparación de frases y de ideas; pero ahora, desde hacía ya muchos años, aquel sentimiento se había adormecido.

No tenía una noción clara al respecto del bautismo de los niños y de la frecuentación de la iglesia, a no ser lo que Dolly le había dicho que eso sería bueno para la niña. De este modo, a medida que las semanas formaban meses, la niña creaba sin cesar vínculos nuevos entre la existencia de Marner y de las personas que siempre había evitado hasta entonces para aislarse de un modo más completo. Contrariamente al oro, que no tenía necesidad de nada y que tenía que ser adorado en una soledad por completo secreta, oculto a toda luz, sordo al canto de los pájaros, que no se estremecía al son de ninguna voz humana, Eppie era una criatura cuyas necesidades eran infinitas, y sus deseos siempre eran crecientes.

Era una criatura que amaba y buscaba la luz del sol, el ruido y los movimientos de la vida, que todo lo ensayaba teniendo fe en las alegrías nuevas, y que hacía nacer la bondad en los ojos de todos los que la miraban. El oro había confinado los pensamientos de Silas en un círculo siempre igual y que no conducía a ninguna parte más allá de sus propios límites; Eppie, criatura formada de cambios y esperanzas, obligaba ahora a sus pensamientos a ir hacia adelante. Ella los arrastraba muy lejos de aquel objeto a que se dirigían siempre antes y los llevaba hacia nuevas cosas que debían venir con los años futuros, cuando la joven hubiese aprendido a comprender qué padre abnegado había sido Silas para ella.

La niña hacía buscar a Marner las imágenes de ese porvenir en los vínculos y las obras caritativas que unían entre sí a las familias de sus vecinos. El oro lo había obligado a prolongar cada vez más su trabajo, los ojos y los oídos cerrados a todas las cosas que no fueran la monotonía de su telar y la uniformidad de su tejido. Pero Eppie lo distraía de su trabajo, haciéndole considerar todas las interrupciones como momentos de felicidad. Su vida nueva despertaba los sentidos de Silas a punto de reanimar la alegría de éste, aun a la vista de las viejas moscas adormecidas por el invierno que salían con esfuerzo arrastrándose al sentir los primeros rayos del sol de primavera. La niña reavivaba la alegría del tejedor, porque ella misma era alegre.

Cuando el sol se hizo más vivo prolongándose más el día y los botones de oro esmaltaban la pradera, se podía ver a Silas —sea a mediodía, sea al declinar la tarde, en el momento en que las sombras de los cercos se alargaban—, se podía ver a Silas que salía de su casa con la cabeza descubierta, llevando a pasear a Eppie más allá de las canteras, a los sitios en que crecían aquellas flores. Se detenía cerca de alguna loma favorita que le permitía sentarse, mientras que Eppie iba titubeando a recoger los botones de oro, interpelando a las criaturas aladas que murmuraban felices encima de sus pétalos brillantes y atrayendo continuamente la atención de «papá» cuando le traía su cosecha. Después prestaba oído al canto brusco de algún pájaro, y Silas aprendía a divertirla, haciéndole seña de callarse, a fin de que pudieran escuchar, a la espera de los acentos que iban a recomenzar. Y cuando volvían, ella alzaba los hombros y reía gorjeando su triunfo. Sentados de este modo entre el follaje, Silas se puso de nuevo a recoger las plantas que le eran antes familiares. Al ver las hojas con sus contornos y nervaduras inmutables en el hueco de su mano, sintió renacer una multitud de recuerdos que rechazaba con timidez. Sus pensamientos buscaban entonces refugio en el pequeño mundo de Eppie, el cual sólo pesaba ligeramente en su cerebro debilitado.


T. J. Thomson '7

A medida que el espíritu de la niña crecía en saber, el espíritu de Silas crecía en recuerdos; a medida que la vida se desarrollaba, el alma del tejedor, largo tiempo aletargada en una fría y estrecha prisión, se desarrollaba también, y, toda trémula, volvía a una plena conciencia de sí mismo.

Era una influencia que iría adquiriendo fuerza con cada nuevo año transcurrido.

Los sonidos infantiles que agitaban el corazón de Silas se articularon y reclamaron respuestas más precisas; las formas y los ruidos se tornaron más claros para los ojos y los oídos de Eppie; y hubo cosas nuevas que le pidió a «papá» con tono imperativo que observase y le explicase. Además, cuando Eppie cumplió tres años desplegó el lindo talento de hacer travesuras o de encontrar medios ingeniosos para causar molestias, talento que proporcionaba mucho ejercicio, no sólo a la paciencia de Silas, sino también a su ciencia y sagacidad.

En estas ocasiones, el pobre Marner se veía puesto en conflictos por las exigencias incompatibles del deber y del cariño. Dolly Winthrop le decía entonces que los castigos le harían bien a Eppie, y que no era posible educar una criatura si ciertas partes blandas y que no corren ningún riesgo por esto, no le escocían de cuando en cuando.

—Además, podríais hacer otra cosa, maese Marner —agregó Dolly con aire pensativo—, y sería encerrarla alguna vez en la carbonera. Fue así como he procedido con Aarón, porque era tan débil para con mi niño menor, que no podía soportar la idea de castigarlo. No tenía alma para dejarlo más de un minuto en la carbonera, pues era lo bastante para tiznar por completo al niño, de modo que había que lavarlo y vestirlo de nuevo. Eso le hacía tanto bien como el látigo, podéis creerme. Pero dejo a vuestra conciencia la tarea de decidir, maese Marner, porque tenéis que elegir una cosa o la otra —el látigo o la carbonera—; de otro modo se va a volver tan voluntariosa que no habrá medio de dominarla.

Silas quedó convencido de la triste verdad de esta última observación; pero su energía de carácter, lo abandonó ante las dos únicas especies de castigos que le proponían. No sólo le era penoso castigar a Eppie, sino que temblaba de estar en desacuerdo con ella un solo momento, temiendo que fuera a disminuir el afecto que ella le tenía. Si un Goliat afectuoso se encariña por una criatura delicada y teme tirar del vínculo que a ella lo une, y teme, sobre todo, que se rompa ese vínculo, decidme, os ruego, ¿cuál será el amo de los dos? Era evidente que Eppie, con sus pequeños pasos vacilantes, hacía vacilar a su gusto a su papá Silas cualquier día en que las circunstancias favorecieran su travesura.

Por ejemplo; él había elegido una ancha faja de lienzo a fin de atar a Eppie a su telar cuando estaba muy ocupado. Aquella faja formaba un cinturón alrededor del talle de la criatura y era bastante larga para que ésta pudiera llegar hasta su pequeño lecho y sentarse en él, pero era lo bastante corta como para que Eppie no ensayara alguna ascensión peligrosa. Ahora bien, una mañana Silas estaba más atareado que de costumbre porque estaba armando una pieza en el telar, y tuvo que recurrir para esto a las tijeras. Este instrumento, gracias a una advertencia especial de Dolly, había estado siempre cuidadosamente fuera del alcance de Eppie. Sin embargo, su ruido peculiar tuvo una atracción particular para su oído, y, después de haber espiado los resultados de aquel ruido, sacó la consecuencia filosófica de que la misma causa debía producir el mismo efecto.

Silas se había sentado en su telar y el ruido del aparato había recomenzado; pero dejó las tijeras en un punto que el tránsito de Eppie podía alcanzar. Entonces, como un ratón que acecha el momento oportuno, salió furtivamente de su rincón, se apoderó de aquel objeto y volvió dando traspiés hasta su cama, alzando los hombros como para ocultar su hurto. Tenía una intención decidida en lo que concernía al uso de las tijeras. Después de haber cortado la faja de tela de un modo irregular, pero eficaz, se dirigió en dos segundos hacia la puerta abierta adonde la llamaba el brillo del sol, mientras que el pobre Silas la creía más preciosa que de costumbre. Fue sólo cuando volvió a necesitar las tijeras que lo sorprendió la terrible realidad. Eppie se había escapado sola, quizás se había caído en la cantera. Silas, agitado por el temor más grande que podía asaltarlo, se precipitó hacia afuera gritando: «¡Eppie!», y corrió rápidamente hacia el espacio sin cerco, explorando las cavidades secas en que hubiera podido caer e interrogando en seguida con los ojos asustados la superficie lisa y rojiza del agua. Gotas frías de sudor le mojaron la frente. ¿Cuánto tiempo haría que había salido? Le quedaba una esperanza: que se hubiera deslizado a través de la cerca para ir a las praderas, donde tenía la costumbre de llevarla a dar una vuelta. Pero la hierba estaba alta y no había medio de descubrir si Eppie estaba allí, sino buscándola atentamente, lo que hubiera sido un delito en el plantío del señor Osgood. Sin embargo, había que resignarse; así es que el pobre Silas, después de haber sondeado bien con la mirada los alrededores de las cercas, atravesó la hierba, creyendo, con su vista corta, distinguir a Eppie tras de cada mata de acedera roja, viéndola continuamente alejarse a medida que se aproximaba. Buscó en vano en la pradera; entonces, salvó el cerco y se encontró en la propiedad vecina.

Fijó la vista con una última esperanza en un pequeño estanque que el verano había secado en parte, dejando un ancho borde de lava viscosa. Era allí, sin embargo, que Eppie estaba sentada, conversando animadamente con su zapatito que le servía de balde para acarrear agua a la huella profunda de una pata de caballo, mientras que su pequeño pie desnudo estaba cómodamente apoyado en un cojín de lodo verdoso. Un ternero de cabeza roja la observaba, indeciso y alarmado, a través del cerco opuesto.



Había en aquello, tratándose de una criatura bautizada, un caso indiscutible de aberración que exigía un tratamiento severo, pero Silas, dominado por la alegría convulsiva de haber hallado su tesoro, no supo hacer otra cosa más que cargar a Eppie vivamente y cubrirla de besos entrecortados por sollozos. Fue sólo después de llevarla a la casa y de haber procedido al lavatorio necesario que se acordó de la necesidad de castigar «para que la niña se acordara». La idea de que podía escapar de nuevo y hacerse daño lo impulsó a realizar un acto extraordinario y por primera vez se determinó a recurrir a la carbonera, pequeña alacena situada junto al hogar.

—Mala, mala Eppie —comenzó a decir Silas de pronto, teniéndola sobre las rodillas y mostrándole que tenía los pies y las ropas cubiertos de barro—; mala, que cortó la faja y se fue. Ahora Eppie tiene que entrar en la carbonera porque es mala. Papá va a encerrarla en la carbonera.

Medio creía que aquellas palabras producirían una impresión bastante fuerte para que Eppie se pusiera a llorar. En vez de esto se puso a brincotear en las rodillas de Marner como si éste le propusiera una novedad agradable. Viendo que era necesario recurrir a los extremos, la metió en la carbonera y cerró la puerta temblando de que empleara una medida excesiva. Durante el primer momento no oyó nada; pero en seguida oyó un pequeño grito:

—¡Abe, abe!

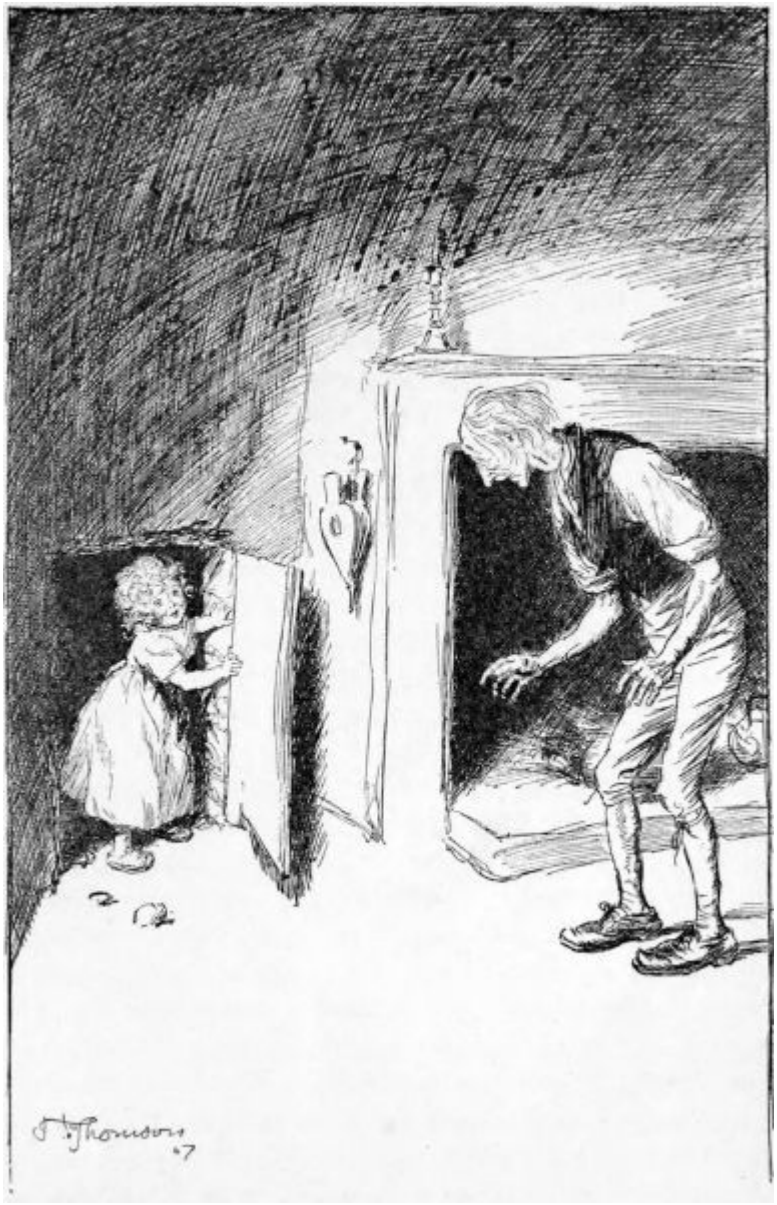
Y Silas la hizo salir, diciendo:

—Ahora, Eppie va a ser buena; de otro modo va a ir a la carbonera, al rincón negro.

El telar permaneció silencioso largo rato esa mañana porque hubo que lavar a Eppie y ponerle ropas limpias; sin embargo, era de esperar que este castigo tendría un efecto duradero y ahorraría tiempo en el porvenir. Quizá, sin embargo, hubiera sido preferible que Eppie llorara algo más.

En una media hora estuvo limpia, habiendo Silas vuelto la espalda para ver qué haría con la faja de lienzo; la tiró al suelo, pensando que Eppie se quedaría quieta el resto de la mañana sin que fuera preciso atarla. Se volvió en seguida para sentar a la niña en su sillita cerca del telar, cuando ésta se le apareció con la cara y las manos tiznadas otra vez, y diciendo:

—¡Eppie e la carbonera!


H. Thomson '07

Este completo fracaso de la pena disciplinaria de la carbonera destruyó la confianza que tenía Silas en la eficacia de los castigos.

—Lo tomaría siempre a broma —le dijo a Dolly— si no la castigo, y soy incapaz de hacerlo, señora Winthrop. Las mortificaciones que me causa las puedo soportar y no tiene malas costumbres, de las que no puede librarse algún día.

—Sí, es cierto en parte, maese Marner —dijo Dolly con simpatía—, y si no tenéis las fuerzas de resolveros a impedir que toque los objetos asustándola, es preciso que os arregléis de modo que no queden a su alcance. Así es como tengo que hacer con los perritos que mis chicos siempre están criando. Hagáis lo que hagáis, esos animales siempre mordisquean y roen; y lo mordisquean y lo roen todo, hasta la cofia del domingo, si está colgada a su alcance. Para ellos tanto da, que Dios los ayude. Es la dentición lo que los pone así, eso es.

De modo que Eppie fue criada sin castigos, soportando en cambio el peso de sus fechorías su padre Silas. La choza de piedra se convirtió para ella en un dulce nido acolchado con el plumón de la paciencia; y en el mundo que estaba más allá de aquella morada, tampoco conoció miradas severas ni responsos.

A pesar de la dificultad de llevarla al mismo tiempo que el hilo y el tejido, Silas la conducía casi siempre consigo cuando tenía que ir a las granjas. No quería dejarla en casa de Dolly Winthrop, bien que ésta estuviera siempre dispuesta a guardarla. La pequeña Eppie, de cabellos crespos, la niña del tejedor, se volvió, pues, un tema de interés para los habitantes de varias casas apartadas, lo mismo que para las de la aldea. Hasta aquí se había tratado a Marner casi como si fuera un gnomo o un brujo útil, como si fuera un ser extravagante e incomprensible que no era posible mirar sin una mezcla de sorpresa o de aversión.

Siempre se deseaba cambiar con él los saludos y ajustar los tratos lo más pronto posible; pero al mismo tiempo se procedía con él de un modo propiciatorio, y a veces haciéndole un regalo de carne de cerdo o de productos del jardín, porque sin su ayuda no había medio de hacer tejer lino. Pero ahora Silas encontraba rostros francos y sonrientes y se le hablaba con tanto placer como a una persona cuyas satisfacciones y pesares podrían ser comprendidos. En todas partes tenía que sentarse y hablar de la niña, y siempre se estaba dispuesto a dirigirle palabras de interés.

—¡Ah, maese Marner!, tendréis suerte si le da temprano un ligero sarampión, o si no; en verdad que pocos hombres solteros hubieran adoptado una criatura como ésta; pero supongo que el tejer os hace más diestro que a los hombres que trabajan en el campo. Sois casi tan hábil como una mujer, porque el tejer viene después del hilar.

Dueños y dueñas de casa, sentados en anchos sillones de cocina, observaban desde allí los acontecimientos y meneaban la cabeza a propósito de lo difícil que era criar los niños. Sin embargo, si llegaban a tocar los brazos y las piernas rollizos de Eppie tenían que reconocer su notable dureza y le decían a Silas que si salía buena —lo que no era posible saber—, sería muy bueno que tuviera a su lado una joven seria que se ocupara de él cuando estuviera demasiado viejo para poder trabajar.

Las sirvientas se entretenían en llevarla a que viera las gallinas y los pollos o a recoger algunas cerezas en el huerto. Y los niños y las chiquillas se le acercaban lentamente, con movimientos prudentes, y las miradas fijas —como perritos que avanzan hociquito contra hociquito hacia otro compañero— hasta que la atracción alcanza el punto en que los suaves labios se ofrecen para recibir un beso. Ninguna criatura tenía miedo de acercarse al tejedor cuando Eppie estaba a su lado. La presencia de Marner ya no tenía nada de repulsiva, ni para los jóvenes ni para los viejos, porque la niña había conseguido atarle de nuevo al mundo entero. Había entre él y Eppie un amor que los confundía en un solo ser, y había amor entre la niña y el mundo, desde los hombres y las mujeres que tenían para ella palabras y miradas de padre y de madre, hasta las caccinelas rojas y los guijarros redondos.

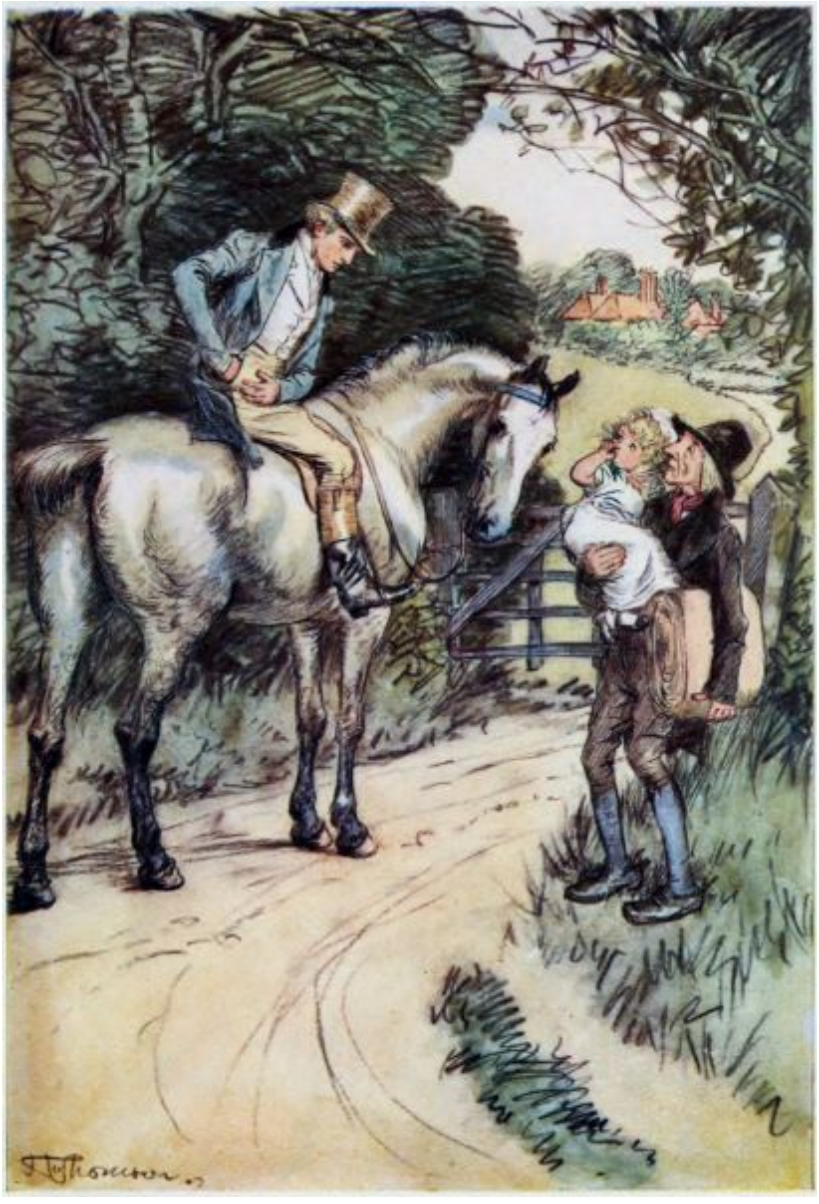

A. J. Thomson 07

Silas se puso a considerar la existencia de Raveloe, desde el punto de vista exclusivo de Eppie. Quería proporcionarle a su hija todo lo que se consideraba un bien en la aldea; y escuchaba con docilidad, a fin de llegar a entender mejor lo que era esa vida, de la que había permanecido alejado durante cinco años, como si hubiera sido una cosa extraña con la que no pudiera tener nada de común. Así procede el hombre que tiene una planta preciosa a la que quiere dar asilo y alimento, en un suelo nuevo para ella: piensa en la lluvia, en el sol, en todas las influencias con relación a su pupila. Trata de conocer asiduamente todo lo que pudiera serle útil, sea para satisfacer las necesidades de las raíces penetrantes, sea para proteger la hoja y el botón contra la agresión peligrosa. El empeño de atesorar había sido por completo destruido por Marner desde que perdiera el oro que acumulaba durante tanto tiempo. Las monedas que había ganado en seguida le parecían tan inútiles como piedras aportadas para terminar una casa bruscamente sepultada por un temblor de tierra. El sentimiento de la pérdida que había sufrido era para él un peso demasiado grave para que las antiguas fruiciones de la satisfacción se despertaran otra vez al contacto de las monedas nuevamente adquiridas. En adelante algo había venido a reemplazar su tesoro, algo que, dando a sus ganancias un fin creciente, arrastraba siempre hacia adelante, más allá del dinero, sus esperanzas y sus alegrías.

En los antiguos días había ángeles que venían a tomar a los hombres por las manos y los alejaban de la ciudad de la destrucción. Ahora ya no vemos mensajeros alados, pero, sin embargo, los hombres son todavía conducidos lejos de la destrucción inminente; una mano les toma la suya y los conduce suavemente hacia una tierra apacible y resplandeciente, de suerte que no miran más tras de sí, y esa mano puede ser la de un niño.

XV

HABÍA UNA persona —se la adivinará sin esfuerzo— que más que cualquiera otra observaba con viva, con secreta solicitud el desarrollo próspero de Eppie, bajo la influencia de los cuidados del tejedor. Esa persona no se atrevía a hacer nada que diera a suponer que tenía interés especial por la hija adoptiva de un pobre hombre y no el que debía esperarse de la bondad de un joven *squire*, al que un encuentro fortuito sugería la idea de gratificar con un pequeño presente al pobre viejo mirado por todos con benevolencia. Pero esa persona se decía que llegaría el día en que podría hacer algo por aumentar el bienestar de su hija sin exponerse a las sospechas. Entretanto, ¿lo mortificaba mucho la imposibilidad en que estaba de darle a aquella niña sus derechos de nacimiento? No sabría decirlo. Eppie era bien atendida. Sería feliz probablemente como lo son a menudo las gentes de humilde condición, más feliz quizá que las que son criadas en el lujo.



Aquel famoso anillo que pinchaba al príncipe toda vez que olvidaba sus deberes para entregarse al placer, yo me pregunto si lo pinchaba vivamente cuando partía para la caza, o bien si le hacía entonces una leve picadura y no lo hería en carne viva sino cuando la cacería había terminado hacía tiempo y la esperanza, replegando las alas, miraba hacia atrás y se convertía en placer…

En cuanto a Godfrey, sus mejillas y sus ojos estaban ahora más brillantes que nunca. Tenía propósitos tan decididos que su carácter parecía haberse vuelto firme. Dunsey no había reaparecido; se creyó por la generalidad que se había enrolado voluntario o que se había ido al extranjero, nadie tenía la idea de pedirle datos precisos a una familia honorable sobre un asunto tan delicado. Godfrey había dejado de ver la sombra de Dunsey atravesada en su camino, y este camino lo conducía entonces directamente hacia la realización de sus deseos predilectos, los deseos que más largo tiempo había acariciado.

Todo el mundo decía que el señor Godfrey había tomado el buen camino y era bastante fácil adivinar cómo acabarían las cosas, pues pocos eran los días de la semana en que no se le veía dirigirse a caballo a las Gazaperas. El propio Godfrey, cuando le preguntaron bromeando si ya estaba fijado el día, sonreía con la sensación agradable de un pretendiente que hubiera podido responder «sí» si así lo hubiera querido. Se sentía transformado, libre de la tentación y la visión de su vida futura se le aparecía como una tierra prometida por la que no tenía necesidad de combatir. Se veía en el porvenir con toda felicidad concentrada alrededor de su hogar, mientras que Nancy le sonreía y él jugara con los niños.

Y aquella otra criatura sin sitio en la morada paterna, no la abandonaría. Velaría por que fuese feliz. Ése era su deber de padre.

SEGUNDA PARTE

XVI

ERA UN hermoso día de otoño, diez y seis años después que Silas Marner había descubierto su nuevo tesoro ante el hogar de su choza. Las campanas de la vieja iglesia de Raveloe repicaban alegremente anunciando que había terminado el oficio de la mañana. Por la puerta abovedada de la torre iban saliendo lentamente, detenidos por los saludos y preguntas amistosas, los más ricos feligreses que habían considerado aquella hermosa mañana del domingo muy apropiada para ir a la iglesia. Era costumbre habitual en esa época que los miembros más importantes de la congregación fueran los primeros que salieran. Mientras tanto, sus vecinos de condición más humilde esperaban y miraban llevándose la mano a las cabezas inclinadas, o haciendo reverencias para saludar a todo mayor contribuyente que se volvía para mirarlos.

En la primera fila de esos grupos de gentes bien vestidas que avanzaban hay algunos personajes que reconoceremos a despecho del tiempo, cuya mano ha pasado sobre todas ellas. Ese hombre de cuarenta años, alto y rubio, no tiene rasgos muy distintos de los de Godfrey Cass a los veintiséis años; sólo está algo más grueso y ha perdido la expresión indefinible de la juventud, pérdida que se manifiesta aun cuando la vista se mantenga brillante y no hayan aparecido todavía las arrugas.

Quizás esta linda mujer que no es más joven que él y que se apoya en su brazo esté más cambiada que su marido; el encantador sonrojo que antes coloreaba constantemente sus mejillas quizás no reaparezca más que momentáneamente bajo la influencia del aire fresco de la mañana o de alguna gran sorpresa.

Sin embargo, para aquellos que gustan tanto más de la fisonomía humana cuanto mejor se lee en ella la experiencia de la vida, la belleza de Nancy ofrece un interés mayor. A menudo el alma llega al completo desarrollo de su bondad cuando la vejez la ha recubierto con una fea envoltura; es por esto que la mirada no basta para adivinar la excelencia de un justo. Pero los años no han sido tan crueles para con Nancy. Su boca roja pero tranquila y la mirada límpida y franca de sus ojos pardos, dicen ahora que su naturaleza ha sufrido y ha conservado sus más nobles cualidades. También su traje, de una elegancia graciosa y de una pureza delicada, es más expresivo ahora que las coqueterías de la juventud no intervienen para nada.

El señor y la señora Godfrey Cass —todo otro título más elevado expiró en los labios de la gente de Raveloe el día en que el viejo *squire* fue a unirse con sus mayores, y en que su herencia fue repartida entre sus hijos— se volvieron para ver llegar a un hombre alto y anciano y a una mujer sencillamente vestida que estaban más atrás, habiendo observado Nancy que debían esperar a «papá con Priscila». Ahora todos doblan por un sendero más estrecho que atraviesa el cementerio y conduce a una pequeña puerta situada frente a la Casa Roja. No los seguiremos porque en este momento quizás haya otras personas en esa congregación que sale de la iglesia que nos agradaría volver a ver, ciertas personas que no se encontrarán probablemente entre las vestidas con elegancia, y que puede que no sea tan fácil reconocer como al dueño y la dueña de la Casa Roja.

Sin embargo, no es posible equivocarse respecto a Silas Marner. Como sucede con las personas que han sido miopes en su juventud, sus grandes ojos negros parecían haber adquirido una vista más larga, tienen una mirada menos vaga y más simpática.

Todo el resto de su persona atestigua, en cambio, una constitución muy debilitada por el lapso de diez y seis años. Sus espaldas encorvadas y sus cabellos blancos le dan casi el aire de un anciano, bien que no tenga más que cincuenta y cinco años. Pero la flor más fresca de la juventud está a su lado: una rubia jovencita, de diez y ocho años, de rostro hoyuelado, que en vano ha tratado de alisar y recoger sus rizos bajo el ala de su sombrero obscuro. Aquellos rizos ondulan con tanta obstinación como un pequeño arroyo bajo la brisa de marzo y se escapan de la peineta que se empeña en recogerlos detrás de la cabeza. Eppie no deja de estar mortificada por esto, porque ninguna joven de Raveloe tiene cabellos parecidos a los suyos y se imagina que los cabellos tienen que ser lacios. No le gusta dar qué decir ni aun en las más pequeñas

cosas, y por eso ved con qué esmero ha envuelto su libro de oraciones en su pañuelo floreado.

Ese joven de buena planta que viste un traje nuevo de fustán, que camina detrás de ella, no está bien al cabo de esta cuestión de los cabellos cuando Eppie se la propone. Piensa quizá que puede ser que los cabellos lacios sean preferibles, pero no desea que los de Eppie sean de otro modo. Ella adivina que alguien se adelanta detrás de ellos, alguien que piensa en ella de un modo particular y que apela a todo su coraje para ponerse a su lado así que penetren en la callejuela. De otro modo, ¿por qué parecería algo intimidada y cuidaría de no volver la cabeza mientras que le murmuraba a su padre Silas breves frases relativas a los que estaban y a los que no estaban en la iglesia y a la belleza del fresco rojo de la montaña que se asoma tras del muro del presbiterio?

—Me gustaría mucho, papá, que nosotros también tuviéramos un jardín con margaritas dobles; como el de la señora Winthrop —dijo Eppie cuando entraron en la callejuela—. Lo malo es que dicen que eso exigiría mucho trabajo para cavar y traer tierra buena… y vos no lo podríais hacer, ¿verdad, papá? En todo caso no me gustaría que lo hicierais, porque sería un trabajo demasiado penoso para vos.

—No creáis eso, hija mía. Si deseáis tener un jardincito, yo me ocuparé estas largas tardes en cercar un pequeño retazo de tierra inculta, como para que tengáis un cantero o dos de flores. Además, me será fácil remover un poco de tierra por la mañana antes de ponerme al trabajo. ¿Por qué no me dijisteis antes que deseabais tener un jardincito?

—Yo podría puntiaros esa tierra, maese Marner —dijo el joven con traje de fustán que se había puesto al lado de Eppie y se mezcló en la conversación sin ceremonias—. Será para mí una distracción, cuando haya terminado mi tarea o en cualquier otro momento perdido, cuando escasee el trabajo. Os traeré tierra del jardín del señor Cass. Me lo permitirá de buen grado.

—¡Oh Aarón, hijo mío!, ¿habíais estado allí? —dijo Silas—. No os había advertido, porque cuando Eppie me habla de algo me abstraigo por completo en lo que dice. Pues bien, sí, si vos me vais a ayudar a cavar, tanto más pronto le haremos un pequeño jardín.

—Entonces, si os parece bien, yo vendré esta tarde a las Canteras. Resolveremos qué terreno conviene cercar y mañana me levantaré una hora más temprano que de costumbre para dar comienzo al trabajo.

—Pero a condición, papá, que me prometáis no cavar —dijo Eppie—; porque yo no os hubiera hablado de esto —agregó con una expresión reservada y traviesa— si la señora Winthrop no me hubiese dicho que Aarón tendría la bondad de…

—Podíais saber eso sin que mi madre os lo dijera —interrumpió Aarón—; maese Marner creo que también sabe que estoy dispuesto a prestarle mi ayuda de buena gana. No me querrá desairar quitándome esta tarea de entre las manos.

—Bueno, entonces, papá, vos no trabajaréis en el jardín hasta que sea muy fácil —dijo Eppie—, y vos y yo nos pondremos a trazar los canteros y hacer agujeros y a poner plantas en ellos. Las Canteras se volverán un sitio mucho más alegre cuando tengamos algunas flores, porque a mí se me ocurre que las flores pueden vernos y comprender lo que decimos. Y yo desearía tener un poco de romero, de cardamomo y de tomillo; esas plantas huelen bien; pero creo que alhucemas no hay más que en los jardines de los burgueses.

—No es una razón para que no tengáis vos, porque puedo traeros gajos de cualquier planta; estoy obligado a cortar muchas cuando podo y tengo que tirarlas casi todas. Hay un gran cantero de alhucema en la Casa Roja: a la señora le gusta mucho.

—Está bien —dijo Silas con gravedad—, siempre que no nos dediquéis demasiado tiempo o que no pidáis en la Casa Roja nada que tenga algún valor. El señor Cass ha sido tan bueno con nosotros haciéndonos construir la nueva pieza de la choza y dándonos camas y otros objetos, que no podría soportar la idea de molestarle por productos de su jardín o cualquier otra cosa.

—No; no le molestaréis —dijo Aarón—. ¿No hay un jardín en la parroquia donde se pierde una porción de cosas por falta de quien las utilice? Yo me digo algunas veces que nadie carecería de víveres si se sacara mejor partido de la tierra, y si una cosa fuera lo que fuera encontrara una boca para comerla. El trabajar en el jardín hace pensar sin duda en esto. Pero es preciso que me vuelva, porque, si no, mi madre estará inquieta con mi ausencia.

—Traedla con vos esta tarde, Aarón —dijo Silas—, ha de tener algo que indicarnos para que las cosas se hagan mejor.

Aarón se fue y ascendió hacia la aldea, mientras que Eppie y Silas siguieron por el sendero solitario bajo la bóveda de las encinas.

—¡Oh papaíto! —comenzó Eppie cuando estuvieron solos, tomando y oprimiendo los brazos de Silas a la vez que saltaba a su alrededor para darle un beso—. ¡Oh mi papá viejo!, ¡qué contenta estoy! Creo que no nos faltará nada cuando tengamos un pequeño jardín; y yo sabía que Aarón nos lo trabajaría —prosiguió

con aire malicioso y de triunfo—; lo sabía muy bien.

—Sois en realidad una gatita muy bribona —dijo Silas, cuya fisonomía respiraba la felicidad tranquila de la vejez, coronada por el amor—; pero vais a quedar en una gran deuda con Aarón.

—¡Oh, no, absolutamente! —dijo Eppie, riendo y loqueando—; eso le va a gustar mucho.

—Vamos, vamos, dejadme llevar vuestro libro de oraciones, pues lo vais a dejar caer, saltando de ese modo.

Eppie se dio cuenta de que su conducta era observada; sin embargo, el observador no era más que un benévolo burro que pacía con una traba atada a la pata, un asno apacible que no criticaba desdeñosamente las debilidades humanas, y que, por el contrario, se felicitaba cuando se lo admitía a compartirlas haciéndose rascar cuando podía. Eppie, a fin de complacerlo, no dejó de darle esta muestra vulgar de atención, lo que dio el desagradable resultado que se vieran acompañados por el asno que los siguió penosamente hasta la puerta de su habitación.

Pero el ruido de un ladrido agudo en el interior de la choza en el momento en que Eppie ponía la llave en la cerradura, cambió las intenciones del animal, y, sin más invitaciones, se marchó cojeando. El ladrido agudo era el signo de la acogida animada que les preparaba un ratonero negro inteligente. El perro, después de bailar alrededor de las piernas de su amo de un modo desordenado, se precipitó haciendo un barullo desagradable hacia un pequeño gato atigrado que estaba escondido bajo el telar; después volvió de un salto, dando otro ladrido agudo, como diciendo: «He cumplido con mi deber con esta débil criatura». Mientras tanto, la honorable mamá del gatito, sentada en la ventana, se calentaba al sol su pecho blanco y volvía la cabeza con aire dormido, esperando recibir caricias pero nada dispuesta a darse el menor trabajo para obtenerlas.



La presencia de aquellos animales que vivían allí felices, no era el único cambio que hubiera ocurrido en el interior de la choza. Ya no había cama en la pieza común y el pequeño espacio estaba bien guarnecido de muebles decentes, todos cuidados y limpiecitos como para agradar a las miradas de Dolly Winthrop. La mesa de encina y la silla de tres pies de la misma madera no eran de lo que podría esperarse de tan pobre habitación. Habían ido de la Casa Roja con el lecho y otros objetos, porque el señor Godfrey Cass, como todos lo decían en la aldea, se mostraba muy bueno para el tejedor. Al fin y al cabo, ¿no era justo que aquéllos a quienes sus medios se lo permitían fueran en ayuda de aquel hombre? ¿No había criado una huérfana y no había sido para ella un verdadero padre? Además, habiendo sido despojado de su dinero, no poseía más que lo que ganaba con su trabajo cada semana, y además era una época en que el tejido estaba decayendo, porque se hilaba el lino cada vez menos. En fin, maese Marner ya no era nada joven. Nadie le tenía celos al tejedor porque era considerado como un hombre excepcional que tenía más derecho que otro alguno a la ayuda de los vecinos de Raveloe. La superstición que subsistía a su respecto había tomado un tinte más diferente. El señor Macey, que era ahora un débil anciano de ochenta y seis años que nunca se le veía sino junto al fuego y tomando el sol en el umbral de su puerta, emitía el parecer de que, cuando un hombre había procedido como Silas con la huérfana, era una señal de que su dinero reaparecería o de que por lo menos el ladrón tendría que dar cuenta de él. No había que dudarlo, porque el señor Macey agregaba que, en lo que le concernía personalmente, sus facultades nunca habían sido más lúcidas.

Silas se sentó entonces y contempló a Eppie con una mirada satisfecha mientras que ella ponía el mantel limpio y colocaba sobre la mesa el pastel de patatas, recalentado lentamente en una terralla bien seca, encima del fuego que se apagaba insensiblemente y según el método prudente empleado el domingo. Era lo que podía reemplazar mejor el horno, puesto que Silas no había consentido nunca que agregaran uno ni tampoco una parrilla a sus exiguas comodidades. Quería a su viejo fogón de ladrillos como había querido a su cántaro de barro negro. ¿No fue delante de aquella hornalla que encontró a Eppie? Los dioses del hogar existen todavía para nosotros. ¡Que toda nueva fe tolere este fetiquismo, si no quiere de otro modo perjudicar sus raíces!

Silas comió más silenciosamente que de costumbre y pronto puso a su lado su tenedor y su cuchillo para seguir con la vista medio distraída a Eppie que jugaba con el ratonero *Snap* y con la gata, lo que prolongaba mucho el almuerzo de la joven. Pero aquel espectáculo era muy capaz de contener las ideas vagabundas. Eppie, con las ondulaciones radiantes de sus cabellos, con su mentón y su cuello contorneados, cuya blancura era realzada por su traje de algodón azul obscuro, reía alegremente mientras que el gatito, prendiéndose con las cuatro patas del hombro de la joven, formaba, por decirlo así, el modelo del asa de un jarrón. Al mismo tiempo, *Snap*, del lado derecho, y la gata del otro, tendían el hocico o las patas hacia un trozo que Eppie mantenía fuera del alcance de los dos. *Snap* desistía a intervalos a fin de observar la glotonería de la gata y la futilidad de su conducta, haciendo oír un gruñido ruidoso y desagradable, hasta que la joven, dejándose enternecer, los acariciaba a los dos y les repartía el pedazo.

Por fin, Eppie echó una mirada al reloj de pared e interrumpió el entretenimiento, diciendo:

—Mi papaíto quiere ir a fumar su pipa al sol. Pero antes tengo que levantar la mesa, para que todo esté bien limpio en la casa cuando llegue madrina. Voy a apresurarme… En seguidita va a estar…



Silas se había puesto a fumar en una pipa todos los días durante los dos años que acababan de transcurrir. Los ancianos de Raveloe le habían aconsejado mucho que hiciera uso de aquella cosa excelente, cosa contra los ataques. Esta opinión había sido aprobada por el doctor Kimble, a causa de que no hay inconveniente en aconsejar una cosa que no puede hacer daño, principio que le ahorraba a aquel señor mucho trabajo en el ejercicio de la medicina. A Silas no le agradaba mucho fumar, y lo sorprendía a menudo la pasión de sus vecinos a este respecto; pero un humilde acatamiento a toda cosa considerada como buena, se había vuelto un fuerte hábito en la nueva personalidad que se había desarrollado en él, desde que había encontrado a Eppie junto al fuego de su hogar. Este acatamiento fue la única guía que prestó su apoyo al espíritu desorientado de Silas, mientras que se encariñaba con aquella tierna criatura que le había sido mandada desde las tinieblas adonde se había marchado su oro. Mientras que Marner indagaba lo que era útil a Eppie y tomaba parte en el efecto que toda cosa producía en ella, había acabado por apropiarse las formas de las costumbres y de las creencias, que formaban el molde de la vida de Raveloe. Y como con el despertar de los sentimientos la memoria también se despertaba, comenzó a meditar sobre los elementos de la antigua fe y a mezclarlos a sus nuevas impresiones, hasta recobrar la conciencia de una relación entre el pasado y el presente.

La creencia de una bondad tutelar y la confianza de la humanidad que nacen con toda paz y toda alegría pura, habían producido en él la idea vaga de que algún error, alguna equivocación había arrojado una sombra tenebrosa sobre los días de sus mejores años. Además, se le volvía cada vez más fácil abrir su corazón a Dolly Winthrop; así fue que le comunicó poco a poco a aquella nueva amiga todo lo que podía contar de su juventud. Esta confidencia fue necesariamente una operación lenta y difícil, porque la pobre elocuencia de Silas no era secundada por la facilidad de comprensión de Dolly, a quien su limitada experiencia del mundo exterior no le daba clave alguna de las costumbres extranjeras. A causa de esto, toda idea nueva era un motivo de sorpresa que los hacía detenerse en cada punto de la narración. Sólo fue a fragmentos y con intervalos que le permitieran a Dolly meditar sobre las cosas que había oído, hasta que se le hubieran vuelto bastante familiares, que Silas llegó al fin al punto culminante de su triste historia: la «tirada a la suerte» y el juicio falso que había sido su consecuencia. Tuvo que repetir aquello en varias entrevistas, a propósito de nuevas preguntas hechas por Dolly, sobre la naturaleza de aquel método de descubrir al culpable y de justificar al inocente.

—¿Y vuestra Biblia es la misma que la nuestra, estáis bien seguro, maese Marner? ¿La Biblia que trajisteis de aquella comarca es igual a la que tenemos en la iglesia y a la que le sirve a Eppie para aprender a leer?

—Sí —dijo Silas—; es de todo punto igual; y en la Biblia se «tira la suerte», no lo olvidéis —agregó en tono más bajo.

—¡Oh Dios mío! ¡Dios mío! —dijo Dolly con voz apesarada, como si recibiera malas noticias sobre el estado de un enfermo.

Después permaneció un rato silenciosa, y por último prosiguió:

—Hay gentes instruidas que quizás saben el fondo de todo esto. El pastor lo sabe estoy cierta; pero se necesitan grandes palabras para decir estas cosas, palabras que las gentes humildes no son capaces de comprender. Yo no puedo saber nunca exactamente el sentido de lo que oigo en la iglesia, a no ser el de algunas frases salteadas; pero, sin embargo, yo sé que son buenas palabras, estoy cierta. Lo que os pesa en el corazón, maese Marner, es esto; si Aquel que está en lo alto hubiera hecho su deber para con vos, no os habría dejado nunca arrojar como un ladrón perverso, siendo, como erais, inocente.

—¡Oh! —dijo Silas, que ahora había llegado a comprender la fraseología de Dolly—, eso fue lo que cayó sobre mí como un hierro rojo, porque ya lo veis, nadie me quería, nadie me tenía lástima ni en el cielo, ni en la tierra. Y aquél con quien había vivido diez años y más, desde que éramos niños y que lo compartíamos todo… mi amigo íntimo en quien yo tenía confianza, «alzó el pie contra mí y trabajó en mi ruina».

—¡Oh!, pero era un malvado. No creo que haya otro que se le parezca —dijo Dolly—. Sin embargo, estoy muy perpleja, maese Marner; me parece que me acabo de despertar y que no sé si es de día o es de noche. Tengo, por decirlo así, la certidumbre de que se encontraría justicia en lo que os ha sucedido, si se pudiera descubrirla; así como a veces estoy segura de haber puesto una cosa en un sitio, aunque, no consiga dar con él. No teníais por qué desesperaros como lo hicisteis. Pero de esto hablaremos otra vez, porque hay cosas que se me ocurren cuando aplico cataplasmas o pongo sanguijuelas o alguna otra tarea parecida, cosas en que sería incapaz de pensar si estuviera tranquilamente sentada.

Dolly era una mujer demasiado sutil para no tener ocasiones de recibir luces de la naturaleza de aquellas de que había hablado, de modo que no permaneció mucho tiempo sin volver a tratar el asunto.

—Maese Marner —dijo Dolly un día que había ido a llevar a la choza unas ropas de Eppie—, he estado preocupadísima con vuestras cavilaciones y con la «echada a la suerte»; y la cosa se enredó en mi espíritu en todos sentidos, de modo que acabé por no saber cómo considerarlo. Pero una noche la volví a ver completamente clara, por decir así, la noche en que velaba a la pobre Bessy Fawkes, que murió dejando a sus hijos en esta tierra —que Dios los ayude—; el asunto que digo, se me apareció tan claro como la luz del día. Sin embargo, el que lo comprenda bien ahora o el que esté en estado de poderla traer de algún modo a la punta de mi lengua, eso es otra cuestión, porque a menudo tengo muchas cosas en la cabeza que no quieren salir. Y por lo que hace a las gentes de vuestro país que, según vuestro propio testimonio, no dicen nunca oraciones de memoria, ni con su libro, es preciso que sean prodigiosamente hábiles. Yo, si no supiera el Padrenuestro y algunas migajas de buenas palabras que puedo recoger en la iglesia, por más que me pusiera de rodillas todas las noches no sabría qué decir.

—Sin embargo, señora Winthrop, siempre podéis decir alguna cosa que yo soy capaz de comprender —observó Silas.

—Pues entonces, maese Marner, el asunto se me presentó de este modo: soy incapaz de comprender una palabra de la «echada a la suerte» y de la respuesta falsa que dio por resultado. Quizá habría que recurrir al pastor para explicar esto, y no podría hacerlo sino con grandes palabras. Pero lo que me vino al espíritu tan claro como el día, mientras velaba a Bessy Fawkes —siempre se me ocurren estas cosas cuando comparto las penas de mi prójimo, y que comprendo que no puedo hacer mayor cosa por él, ni aunque me levantara en medio de la noche—, lo que me vino al espíritu es que Aquel que está allá arriba tiene un corazón más blando que el mío; porque yo no podría de ningún modo ser mejor que Aquel que me ha creado, y si hay cosas que me es difícil entender, es porque hay otras cosas que ignoro. A este respecto, hay sin duda muchas que me son desconocidas. Lo que sí es muy poco seguramente. Así es que mientras pensaba en esto, os presentasteis a mi espíritu, maese Marner, y entonces todo lo que voy a decir entró, de golpe: si yo he sentido en mí misma lo que hubiera sido justo y razonable para con vos, y si oraron y echaron a la suerte, todos, excepto aquel malo, si ésos, digo, estuvieron dispuestos a hacer por vos lo que era justo en el caso en que lo hubieran podido, ¿no debemos contar con Aquel que nos ha creado, visto que sabe más que nosotros y tiene mejores intenciones? De esto es de lo que estoy segura; el resto es para mí una cuestión complicada cuando pienso en ello; porque vino la fiebre y se llevó mis hijos grandes y me dejó los más débiles; hay los miembros rotos; hay aquellos que, queriendo obrar bien y no beber con exceso, tienen que sufrir a causa de los que son diferentes. ¡Oh!, ¡hay penas en este mundo, y hay cosas que jamás las podemos entender! Todo lo que podemos hacer es tener confianza, maese Marner, y cumplir con nuestro deber, tanto como nos sea posible. Ahora bien: si nosotros que ignoramos tantas cosas estamos en condiciones de darnos cuenta de que existen algún bien y alguna justicia, estemos seguros de que hay más bien y más justicia de las que somos capaces de concebir: y siento en mí misma que no puede ser de otro modo. Y si hubierais podido seguir teniendo confianza no hubierais huido de vuestros semejantes, maese Marner, y no hubierais sido abandonado hasta este punto.

—¡Ah, pero, sin embargo, eso hubiera sido difícil! —dijo Silas con voz baja—; hubiera sido difícil tener confianza entonces.

—No cabe duda —dijo Dolly casi con contrición— que es más fácil decir estas cosas que hacerlas, y casi me da vergüenza hablar de ellas.

—No, no, señora Winthrop —dijo Silas—, tenéis razón. Existe algún bien en este mundo, ahora lo comprendo; y esto nos convence de que hay más del que podemos pretender, a pesar de los disgustos y la maldad. Esa costumbre de echar a la suerte es obscuro, pero la niña no ha sido enciada; hay designios, sí, hay designios a nuestro respecto.

Este diálogo tuvo lugar en tiempo de los primeros años de Eppie cuando Silas tenía que separarse de ella dos horas por día para que fuera a aprender a leer con la maestra de escuela. Había tratado en vano de guiar él mismo los primeros pasos de su hija adoptiva para la instrucción. Ahora que era grande, Silas había tenido ocasión a menudo, en esos momentos de apacible confidencia que se presentan a las personas que viven juntas en un afecto perfecto, de hablar también del pasado con ella; de decirle cómo y por qué había vivido solo hasta que ella fuera enviada. Aun cuando se contara con la reserva más delicada respecto de este punto de parte de las comadres de Raveloe en presencia de Eppie, las preguntas que ésta hiciera al crecer, relativamente a su madre, no hubieran podido ser evitadas sin enterrar por completo el pasado y establecer entre sus corazones una separación dolorosa.

Así es que Eppie sabía desde hacía tiempo cómo su madre había muerto sobre la tierra cubierta de nieve, y cómo ella misma había sido encontrada junto al hogar por su padre Silas, que había creído que los rizos de oro eran sus guineas que le habían devuelto. El efecto tierno y particular con que Eppie habíase

criado bajo sus ojos, en una intimidad casi inseparable, ayudado por la soledad de su habitación, la había preservado de la influencia perniciosa de las conversaciones y de los hábitos de las gentes de la aldea. Este afecto le había conservado en el alma esa frescura que se considera a veces, pero erróneamente, como una cualidad esencial de la rusticidad.

El amor perfecto encierra un perfume de poesía que puede ennoblecer las relaciones de los seres humanos menos cultivados, y Eppie estaba rodeada por ese perfume desde el día en que había seguido el brillante rayo de luz que la guió hasta el hogar de Silas. No hay por qué sorprenderse si, bajo otros aspectos, sin hablar de su belleza delicada, no era por completo una aldeana común y poseía asomos de elegancia y un calor de alma que no eran sino los frutos naturales de sus sentimientos de pureza cultivados por el cariño. Era demasiado niña y demasiado ingenua para que su imaginación se extraviara en preguntas respecto de su padre desconocido. Durante mucho tiempo ni aun se la había ocurrido que debía tener un padre. La idea de que su madre debía de haber tenido un marido sólo se le presentó al espíritu el día en que Silas le mostró el anillo que había sido quitado del dedo de la muerta y cuidadosamente guardado por él en una caja de laca barnizada que tenía la forma de un zapato.

Había confiado aquella caja al cuidado de Eppie cuando ésta fue grande y ella la abría con frecuencia para mirar el anillo; pero, a pesar de esto, casi no pensaba en el padre de que aquella sortija era símbolo. ¿No tenía acaso uno a su lado que quería más de lo que todos los padres verdaderos de la aldea parecían querer a sus hijas? Por el contrario, la cuestión de saber quién era su madre y cómo ésta había llegado a morir en semejante abandono, preocupaba a menudo su espíritu.

Por lo que sabía de la señora de Winthrop, su mejor amiga después de Silas, comprendía que una madre debía ser muy preciosa; y muchas y muchas veces le había pedido a Marner que le dijese cómo era la fisonomía de su madre, a quién se parecía aquella pobre mujer, y cómo la había encontrado contra la mata de retama, guiado hasta aquel sitio por las huellas de los pequeños pasos y de los bracitos echados hacia adelante. La mata de retama todavía estaba allí, y aquella tarde, cuando salió con Silas al sol, eso fue el primer objeto que atrajo y concentró las miradas y los pensamientos de Eppie.

—Papá —dijo la joven con un tono de dulce gravedad que, como una cadencia triste y lenta, interrumpía a veces su alegría—, vamos a cercar la mata de retama; así se encontrará en el ángulo del jardín, y alrededor voy a plantar margaritas y crocus, porque Aarón dice que esas plantas no mueren y se desarrollan cada vez más.

—¡Ay, hija mía! —dijo Silas, siempre dispuesto a hablar cuando tenía su pipa en la mano, causándole evidentemente más placer el dejar de fumar que el arrojar bocanadas—, no estaría bien que dejáramos sin cercar la mata de retama. A mi entender, no hay cosa más bonita cuando está cubierta de flores amarillas. Lo que hay es que me pregunto cómo haremos para tener una cerca. Quizá Aarón pueda darnos un consejo. Necesitamos poner una, porque, si no, los asnos y las otras bestias lo estropearán todo. Y no es fácil hacer una cerca, según tengo entendido.

—¡Ah, se me ocurre una idea, papaíto! —dijo Eppie de pronto, juntando las manos, después de reflexionar un minuto—. Aquí hay una gran cantidad de piedras desparramadas. Algunas no son grandes: podríamos colocarlas unas encima de otras y hacer una pared. Vos y yo colocaríamos las pequeñas y Aarón cargaría las otras, estoy segura.

—Pero, tesoro mío —dijo Silas—, no hay bastantes piedras para rodear todo el jardín, y en cuanto a que las carguéis vos no hay ni qué pensarlo. Con vuestras manitas seríais incapaz de cargar una mayor que una patata. Sois de una constitución delicada, querida mía —agregó con voz suave—; eso es lo que dice la señora de Winthrop.

—¡Oh!, yo soy más fuerte de lo que os imagináis, papá —repuso Eppie—, y si no hay bastantes piedras para cercar todo el jardín, servirán para proteger una parte. Después será más fácil conseguir palos u otras cosas para el resto. ¡Fijaos cuántas piedras hay alrededor de la cantera grande!

Corrió hacia aquella parte para levantar una de aquellas piedras y demostrar su fuerza; pero de pronto retrocedió muy sorprendida.

—¡Ah! Papá —exclamó—, venid a ver cómo ha bajado el agua desde ayer. ¡La cantera estaba ayer tan llena!

—Es cierto —dijo Silas, poniéndose junto a ella—. ¡Ah!, es el drenaje que han comenzado a hacer después de la cosecha en las praderas del señor Osgood. Me parece que sea eso. El que dirige los trabajos nos dijo días pasados cuando yo pasaba cerca de los obreros: Maese Marner, no me extrañaría que fuésemos a dejar nuestro pequeño campo más seco que un hueso. Es el señor Godfrey Cass quien se ha puesto a drenar; ha readquirido esos prados del señor Osgood.

—¡Qué raro nos va a parecer el ver seca la vieja cantera! —dijo Eppie, mientras que se volvía y

agachaba para levantar una piedra bastante grande.

—Ved, papaíto, que puedo cargar muy bien ésta —agregó dando algunos pasos con mucha firmeza, pero dejando en seguida caer la piedra.

—¡Ah!, qué forzuda sois, ¿eh? —repuso Silas, mientras que Eppie, a quien los brazos le dolían, los sacudía riendo—. Vamos, vamos, no volváis a alzar piedras y venid a sentaros conmigo junto al barranco. Podríais lastimaros, hija mía. Necesitaríais de alguien que trabajara por vos, y mi brazo no es ya bastante vigoroso.

Silas pronunció esta última frase lentamente, como si ella implicara otra cosa que lo que iba a herir el oído. Cuando estuvieron sentados, Eppie se arrimó contra su padre y tomándole con ternura el brazo que ya no era muy vigoroso lo mantuvo sobre sus rodillas mientras que Silas fumaba su pipa concienzudamente, lo que le ocupaba el otro brazo. Tras de Marner y su hija, un fresno de la cerca formaba una pantalla recortada que los protegía contra los rayos del sol y proyectaba sombras felices y alegres alrededor de ellos.

—Papá —dijo Eppie muy dulcemente, después que hubieron quedado silenciosos un instante—, si yo llegara a casarme, ¿me pondrían la sortija de mi madre?

Silas se estremeció de un modo casi imperceptible, bien que la pregunta estuviera conforme con la corriente secreta de sus pensamientos en aquel momento.

Entonces dijo bajando la voz:

—¿Cuándo se os ocurrió, Eppie, esa idea?

—Solamente la semana pasada, papá —dijo Eppie ingenuamente—, cuando Aarón me habló de eso.

—¿Y qué fue lo que os dijo? —agregó Silas bajando siempre la voz, como si temiera decir la menor palabra que no fuera para el bien de Eppie.

—Me dijo que desearía casarse, porque va a cumplir veinticinco años y tiene mucho trabajo en los jardines desde que el señor Mott se ha retirado. Va regularmente dos veces por semana a casa del señor Gass, una vez a casa del señor Osgood y van a tomarlo también en el presbiterio.

—¿Y con quién se quiere casar? —dijo Silas sonriendo con bastante tristeza.

—Pero, conmigo, naturalmente, papaíto —respondió Eppie con una sonrisa, que acentuaba sus hoyuelos; y besándole las mejillas a Silas, agregó—: ¡como si se le pudiera ocurrir casarse con otra!

—¿Y vuestra intención, Eppie, es ser suya? —continuó Silas.

—Sí, más adelante —respondió Eppie—. No sé cuándo. Aarón dice que todos se casan un día u otro; pero yo le hice notar que eso no era cierto, porque le dije: «Fijaos en papá, que no se ha casado nunca».

—No, hija mía —dijo Silas—; vuestro padre vivió solo hasta que le fuisteis enviada.

—Pero ahora nunca os quedaréis solo, papá —repuso Eppie con ternura—. Aarón me dijo: «Jamás se me ocurrirá, Eppie, la idea de separaros de maese Marner». Y yo le respondí: «Sería inútil que pensarais en eso, Aarón». Quiere que vivamos juntos, a fin de que no tengáis que seguir trabajando, papá, a menos que sea por vuestro gusto. Será para vos un hijo, son sus propias palabras.

—¿Y eso os agradaría, Eppie? —repuso Silas mirándola.

—A mí me daría lo mismo, papá —respondió Eppie con naturalidad—. Me gustaría que las cosas se arreglaran de manera que vos no tuvierais que trabajar. Sin embargo, si no fuese por eso, me gustaría más que no hubiera ningún cambio. Me encuentro muy feliz así; me agrada que Aarón me quiera y venga a vernos con frecuencia y que se conduzca bien con vos; a la verdad que siempre se conduce bien con vos, ¿no es verdad, papá?

—Sí, hija mía; nadie podría portarse mejor —dijo Silas—. Es el digno hijo de Dolly.

—En cuanto a mí, no deseo ningún cambio —prosiguió Eppie—. Me gustaría seguir mucho tiempo, pero mucho tiempo, igual como estamos. Pero Aarón no piensa como yo, y me hizo llorar un poco. ¡Oh, un poquito no más!, porque me dijo que yo no lo quería, porque de otro modo desearía la unión como la desea él.

—Pero, querida hija mía —dijo Silas dejando su pipa a un lado, como si fuera inútil el seguir fingiendo que fumaba—, sois demasiado joven para casaros. Le preguntaremos a la señora de Winthrop, le preguntaremos a la madre de Aarón qué es lo qué piensa ella. Si hay un buen camino que seguir, ella lo encontrará. Sin embargo, hay que pensar en esto, Eppie; las cosas cambian necesariamente, que lo queramos o no; no persistirán mucho tiempo en el estado en que las vemos hoy sin sufrir modificación. Me volveré más viejo y más débil y probablemente seré una carga para vos, si no os dejo por completo. No quiero decir que vos pudierais llegar a considerarme como una carga algún día; yo sé bien que no, pero sería un grave peso para vos. Cuando pienso en eso me agrada suponer que contaréis con otra persona que yo, algo joven y fuerte que me sobreviva y cuidaría de vos hasta el fin.

Silas hizo una pausa y colocando las manos sobre las rodillas las alzó y bajó alternativamente, fijando la

mirada en el suelo.

—Entonces, ¿os agradaría verme casada, papá? —dijo Eppie con la voz algo trémula.

—Yo no soy un hombre capaz de decir que no, hija mía —respondió Silas con acento enérgico—. Pero se lo preguntaremos a vuestra madrina. Ella deseará vuestro bien y el de su hijo.

—Ahí vienen, precisamente —dijo—. Vamos a recibirlos. ¡Oh, la pipa!, ¿no querréis volver a encontrarla, papá? —agregó la joven recogiendo del suelo aquel aparato medicinal.

—No, querida mía —respondió Silas—. Basta por hoy. Me parece que fumar poco a la vez me sienta mejor que fumar mucho.

XVII

MIENTRAS QUE Silas y Eppie estaban sentados en el banco de césped conversando a la sombra recortada de una encina, la señorita Priscila Lammeter se resistía a aceptar los argumentos de su hermana. Ésta pretendía que valdría más tomar el té en la Casa Roja y dejar que durmiera una buena siesta el señor Lammeter, que partir para las Gazaperas con el cabriolé así que terminara la comida. Los miembros de la familia —cuatro personas solamente— estaban sentados alrededor de la mesa, en el salón de sombrío artesonado. Tenían por delante el postre del domingo, compuesto de avellanas verdes, de manzanas y peras, bien adornadas de hojas por la mano de Nancy, antes de que las campanas de la iglesia llamaran al oficio.

Un gran cambio había tenido lugar en aquel salón de sombríos artesonados desde que lo vimos en el tiempo en que Godfrey era soltero, y que el viejo *squire* reinaba viudo. Hoy todo reluce en él y no se deja que el menor polvo de la víspera empañe ningún objeto, desde la franja de mosaico de encina que rodea la alfombra, hasta el fusil, los látigos y los bastones del viejo *squire*, escalonados en las astas del ciervo encima de las campanas de la chimenea. Todos los otros atributos de sport y de ocupaciones exteriores habían sido relegados por Nancy a otra pieza. Pero había traído a la Casa Roja el hábito de la veneración filial y conservado religiosamente en un sitio de honor aquellas reliquias del difunto padre de su marido. Las copas de plata siguen siempre sobre el aparador, pero su metal repujado no está empañado por el tacto y no hay en su fondo residuos que afecten el olfato; el único olor predominante es el del espliego y el de las hojas de rosas que llenan los vasos de alabastro inglés. Todo respira pureza y orden en aquella pieza, antes triste, porque un nuevo espíritu tutelar entró en ella hace quince años.

—Bueno, papá —dijo Nancy—, ¿es en verdad necesario que os volváis a tomar el té a vuestra casa? ¿No podríais quedaros con nosotros en una tarde que parece va a ser tan hermosa?

El viejo señor Lammeter acababa de hablar con Godfrey del impuesto creciente para los pobres y de la ominosa época actual, de modo que no había oído la conversación de sus hijas.

—Hija mía, preguntadle eso a Priscila —dijo con la voz firme de antaño, pero ahora algo quebrada—. Ella dirige la granja y a su padre.

—Tengo buenas razones para dirigiros, papá, porque de otro modo os mataríais atrapando reumatismos. Y por lo que hace a la granja, si algo no marcha bien —lo que no es posible evitar en los tiempos en que vivimos—, nada mata más ligero a un hombre que el no tener a quien dirigir reproches como no sea a sí mismo. La mejor manera de ser amo es hacer dar la orden por otros y reservarse el derecho de censurar. Más de una persona se evitaría un ataque procediendo así; ésta es mi opinión.

—Bueno, bueno, querida —dijo el padre riendo tranquilamente—; yo no he dicho que no dirigierais para bien de todos.

—Entonces, Priscila, dirigid de modo que os quedéis a tomar el té —dijo Nancy posando afectuosamente la mano sobre el brazo de su hermana—. Ahora venid, vamos a dar una vuelta por el jardín, mientras papá echa su siesta.

—Mi querida hermana, hará un sueño espléndido en el cabriolé, como que soy yo quien guiará. En cuanto a que nos quedemos a tomar el té, no puedo oír hablar de eso, porque la muchacha lechera, que se va a casar para el día de San Miguel, lo mismo derramaría la leche fresca en la batea de los cerdos que en los lebrillos. Así son todas; se imaginan que el mundo va a ser hecho de nuevo porque ellas tengan marido. Bueno, voy a ponerme el sombrero y podremos dar una vuelta por el jardín mientras atan el caballo.



Cuando las dos hermanas se pusieron a recorrer los senderos del jardín prolijamente limpios, rodeados de céspedes cuyo verde claro contrastaba agradablemente con el tinte sombrío de las pirámides y de las bóvedas y con el de los cercos de boj que se elevaban como murallas de verdura, Priscila dijo:

—Estoy muy contenta con que vuestro marido haya hecho esa permuta de terreno con el primo Osgood y que comience a ocuparse en una lechería. Es una gran lástima que no lo hayáis hecho antes. Así tendréis algo en que ocupar el espíritu. Cuando las personas quieren hacer algo, no hay nada como una lechería para pasar el tiempo. En efecto, si se trata de limpiar los muebles, pronto se acaba. Una vez que podéis miraros en una mesa como en un espejo, no hay nada más que hacer; pero en una lechería siempre hay alguna ocupación nueva, y además, hasta en el rigor del invierno se siente cierto placer en vencer a la mantequilla y obligarla a formarse, quieras que no. Mi querida —agregó Priscila, estrechando afectuosamente la mano de su hermana, yendo la una junto a la otra—, nunca estaréis triste cuando tengáis una lechería.

—¡Ah! Priscila —dijo Nancy devolviéndole el apretón de manos y dirigiéndole una mirada agradecida de sus ojos límpidos—, eso no será una compensación para Godfrey; una lechería es poca cosa para un hombre; yo estaría contenta con lo que tenemos si él lo estuviera también.

—Me ponen fuera de mí estos hombres con su manera de proceder —dijo Priscila impetuosamente—; siempre y siempre están deseando algo y nunca están contentos con lo que tienen. Son incapaces de quedarse quietos en su silla cuando no tienen dolores ni disgustos; es preciso que se encajen una pipa en la boca para aumentar su bienestar, o que beban algo muy fuerte, aunque tengan que apurarse antes que llegue el momento de la comida. Y si a Dios le hubiera complacido haceros fea como a mí, de modo que los hombres no os hubieran andado detrás, nos hubiéramos podido limitar a nuestra familia sin tener que habérnoslas con esos señores que tienen sangre turbulenta en las venas.

—¡Oh!, no habléis así, Priscila —dijo Nancy, arrepintiéndose de haber provocado aquella explosión—; nadie tiene motivos para censurar a Godfrey. Es natural que lo disguste no tener hijos, porque a los hombres agrada tener hijos por quienes trabajan y ahorran y siempre había contado jugar con los suyos mientras fueran pequeños. Muchos otros en su lugar se lamentarían más que él. Es el mejor de los maridos.

—¡Oh!, ya conozco —dijo Priscila con una sonrisa sarcástica— esa manera de ser de las mujeres casadas; os incitan a hablar mal de sus maridos y luego se vuelven contra vos y os hacen el elogio de esos señores, como si los tuvieran para vender. Pero papá debe estarnos esperando; volvámonos.

El gran cabriolé, tirado por el viejo y tranquilo caballo gris, estaba estacionado delante de la puerta de entrada, y el señor Lammeter estaba ya en el vestíbulo recordándole a Godfrey las buenas cualidades de *Tordillo*, en la época en que su amo lo montaba.

—A mí me ha gustado siempre tener un buen caballo —decía el viejo señor, no gustándole que la época de su juventud fogosa se borrara por completo de los más jóvenes que él.

—No os olvidéis de llevar a Nancy a las Gazaperas, antes del fin de la semana, señor Cass —fue la última recomendación que hizo Priscila en el momento de la partida, mientras que tomaba las riendas y las sacudía ligeramente, manera amistosa de incitar a *Tordillo*.

—Voy a dar una vuelta por los prados, cerca de las Canteras, Nancy, para ver cómo va el drenaje —dijo Godfrey.

—¿Estaréis de vuelta para el té, amigo mío?

—¡Oh!, sí, estaré de vuelta dentro de una hora.

Era costumbre de Godfrey ocupar la tarde del domingo en un paseo de agricultura contemplativa. Nancy lo acompañaba raras veces, porque las mujeres de su generación, a menos que se pusieran a dirigir las relaciones exteriores, como Priscila, no tenían la costumbre de pasear fuera de su casa y de su jardín. Encontraban un ejercicio suficiente en sus ocupaciones domésticas. De modo que cuando estaba sola, Nancy se sentaba generalmente con la Biblia de Mant por delante y, después de haber seguido con la vista el texto algunos momentos, dejaba vagar poco a poco sus pensamientos en la imposibilidad de concentrarlos.

Sin embargo, el domingo esos pensamientos estaban casi siempre en armonía con el fin piadoso y reverente que el libro abierto hacía suponer implícitamente.

Nancy no era lo bastante instruida en teología para discernir claramente las relaciones que existían entre su vida sencilla y obscura y los documentos sagrados de los primeros tiempos, que consultaba sin método. Pero el espíritu de rectitud y la convicción de que era responsable de los efectos de su conducta en los demás, que eran los elementos poderosos de su carácter, le habían hecho contraer el hábito de escrutar los sentimientos y las acciones de su pasado con los cuidados minuciosos de un examen de conciencia. Como su espíritu no era solicitado por una gran variedad de temas, llenaba los momentos de intervalo reviviendo sin cesar interiormente todos los hechos de su existencia que le volvían a la memoria, como aquéllos, sobre

todo, de los quince años transcurridos desde su casamiento y durante los cuales la vida y su fin se habían duplicado ante sus ojos. Recordando los pequeños detalles, las frases, los tonos de la voz y las miradas en las escenas críticas que le habían abierto una era nueva, sea dándole un conocimiento más profundo de las resoluciones y de las pruebas de este mundo, sea invitándola a algún pequeño esfuerzo de indulgencia o de adhesión penoso a un deber imaginario o real, ella se preguntaba continuamente si había sido censurable en algo. Este exceso de reflexión y este examen de conciencia exagerado son quizá una costumbre mórbida, inevitable en un espíritu de una gran sensibilidad moral, privado de su fuente legítima de actividad exterior y no pudiendo entregarse a los cuidados maternales reclamados por su afecto, inevitable en una mujer de noble corazón cuando no tiene hijos y su condición es muy limitada. «Puedo hacer tan poco; ¿lo habré hecho enteramente bien?». Tal era el pensamiento que volvía perpetuamente. Ninguna voz viene a distraer a aquella mujer de su soliloquio, ni ninguna exigencia absoluta puede mitigar la intensidad de sus vanos pesares y de sus escrúpulos superfluos.

Había en la vida matrimonial de Nancy una sucesión importante de experimentos dolorosos a la que se vinculaban ciertas escenas que la habían impresionado profundamente y que su memoria hacía revivir con más frecuencia que las otras.

El corto diálogo de Nancy con su hermana en el jardín, la tarde de aquel domingo, había llevado a su espíritu hacia dirección que tornaba con frecuencia. Así que sus pensamientos se hubieron alejado del texto sagrado que se esforzaba en seguir religiosamente con la mirada y con los labios silenciosos, fue para agrandar el sistema de defensa establecido por ella contra la censura que las palabras de Priscila implicaban. La justificación del objeto amado es el mejor bálsamo que el afecto pueda encontrar para sus propias heridas: «¡Un hombre tiene que tener tantas cosas en la cabeza!». He aquí la creencia que le permite a una mujer conservar a menudo una fisonomía alegre, a pesar de las respuestas bruscas y de las palabras crueles de su marido. Y las heridas más profundas de Nancy procedían todas de la convicción de que Godfrey consideraba la ausencia de hijos en su hogar como una privación a la que no podía acostumbrarse.

Sin embargo, era de imaginar que la dulce Nancy sentiría más vivamente que él todavía la negativa de un bien con que se había contado, entregándose a las esperanzas diversas y a los preparativos a la vez solemnes, graciosos y fútiles de una mujer afectuosa cuando espera que va a ser madre. ¿No había acaso un cajón relleno de objetos —trabajo delicado de sus manos— que no habían sido nunca usados ni tocados, exactamente en el mismo orden en que ella los había colocado catorce años antes, exactamente, salvo que faltaba un vestidito, con el que se había hecho la mortaja? Pero Nancy había soportado sin quejas y con tanta firmeza aquella prueba que la afectaba directamente, que de pronto, y desde hacía muchos años había renunciado al hábito de mirar aquel cajón, por temor de halagar así el deseo de poseer lo que no le había sido dado.

Quizás era esa severidad misma con que reprimía todo abandono lo que Nancy consideraba en su corazón como un pesar culpable, lo que le impedía el mismo principio que era su ley moral. «Es muy diferente… es mucho más duro para un hombre el sentir ese disgusto; una mujer puede siempre ser feliz sacrificándose a su marido; pero un hombre necesita algo que lo haga llevar sus miradas al porvenir; porque, estar sentado junto al hogar es mucho más triste para él que para una mujer». Siempre que Nancy llevaba a este punto sus reflexiones —esforzándose con simpatía preconcebida por ver todas las cosas como las veía Godfrey—, siempre se entregaba a un nuevo examen de conciencia. ¿Había hecho realmente todo lo que estaba en su poder para mitigarle aquella privación a Godfrey? Tenía realmente razón, seis años antes y de nuevo dos años después, para oponer aquella resistencia que le había costado a ella tantos dolores, aquella resistencia al deseo que tenía su marido de adoptar una criatura. La adopción chocaba más con las ideas y costumbres de aquellos tiempos que con las de los nuestros. Sin embargo, Nancy tenía su manera de ver a este respecto. Le era tan necesario el haberse formado una opinión sobre todos los asuntos no concernientes exclusivamente al hombre, como el asignar un lugar bien determinado a cada objeto que le era propio. Y esas opiniones eran siempre principios de acuerdo con los cuales procedía invariablemente. Aquéllas eran firmes, no a causa de sus fundamentos, sino porque ella los sostenía con una tenacidad inseparable de la actividad de su espíritu.

En lo que se refiere a todos los deberes y todas las prácticas de la vida, desde la conducta filial hasta los arreglos del traje de la tarde, la linda Nancy Lammeter, en la época en que cumplió los veintitrés años, poseía su código inimitable, y había formado cada uno de sus hábitos según ese código. Llevando en sí sus juicios definitivos con la mayor discreción posible, aquéllos se arraigaban en su espíritu y crecían en él tan tranquilamente como la hierba en las praderas.

Muchos años antes, como ya sabemos, insistía en vestirse como Priscila, porque «era razonable que dos hermanas se vistiesen del mismo modo», y que «haría una cosa justa si para eso se pusiera un vestido

amarillo color queso». Ése es un ejemplo trivial, pero característico, de la manera cómo estaba reglamentada la vida de Nancy.

Uno de esos principios rígidos, y no un sentimiento mezquino de egoísmo, había sido el motivo de la resistencia obstinada que Nancy había opuesto al deseo de su marido. Recurrir a la adopción, porque les había sido negado el tener hijos, era tratar de elegir su suerte a pesar de la Providencia. La criatura adoptada, estaba convencida, nunca acabaría bien. Sería una causa de maldición para los rebeldes que hubieran buscado deliberadamente un bien que —en virtud de alguna suprema razón— era evidentemente mejor que no lo poseyeran. Si una cosa no debía existir, decía Nancy, era un deber estricto el renunciar hasta al deseo de conseguirla.

Y la verdad es que los hombres más sabios no sabrían expresar en mejores términos los principios de Nancy. Lo que hay solamente es que las condiciones que la inclinaban a considerar como manifiesta que una cosa no debía ser, dependía en ella de un modo muy particular de pensar. Hubiera renunciado a comprar algo en un sitio determinado, si tres veces seguidas la lluvia o cualquier otra causa enviada del cielo se hubiera opuesto a ello; y temido ver acaecerle la fractura de un miembro o algún otro gran infortunio a la persona que persistiera contra tales indicios.

—Pero ¿qué es lo que os autoriza a pensar que la criatura acabaría mal? —le decía Godfrey, haciéndole objeciones—. Ha prosperado en casa del tejedor todo lo que una criatura puede prosperar, y él la ha adoptado. No hay otra niña en toda la aldea que sea más bonita ni que merezca más la suerte que queremos darle. ¿En qué se puede basar la probabilidad que sería una maldición para nadie?

—Sí, mi querido Godfrey —decía Nancy, sentada y con las manos estrechamente unidas, expresando su pesar con el ardiente afecto de su mirada—, es posible que la niña no acabe mal en casa del tejedor, pero él no fue a buscarla como nosotros lo haríamos. Sería mal hecho, lo comprendo, estoy cierta. ¿No recordáis lo que aquella dama que encontramos en las aguas de Royston nos ha dicho respecto de la criatura que su hermana adoptara? Es el único caso de adopción de que he oído hablar; la criatura fue deportada a los veintitrés años. Querido Godfrey, no me pidáis que consienta en lo que sé es malo; no volvería jamás a ser feliz. Comprendo que la cosa es muy penosa y que a mí me es más fácil soportarla; pero es la voluntad de la Providencia.

Podrá parecer singular que Nancy, con su teoría religiosa, formada pieza por pieza con tradiciones sociales estrechas, con fragmentos de doctrinas de la Iglesia imperfectamente comprendidas y con razonamientos infantiles basados en su propia experiencia hubiese llegado por sí sola a tener un modo de pensar tan parecido al de muchas personas piadosas, cuyas creencias son profesadas en la forma de un sistema que le era completamente desconocido. Eso podría parecer singular, en efecto, si no supiéramos que las creencias humanas, lo mismo que todos los desarrollos naturales, escapan a los límites de los sistemas.

Godfrey había designado primero a Eppie, que entonces tenía unos doce años, como una criatura que les convendría adoptar. No se le había ocurrido nunca que Silas preferiría perder la vida a separarse de su hija. Seguramente que el tejedor querría lo mejor para la niña porque se había dado tanto trabajo, y estaría contento de que una suerte tan grande le cayera a Eppie. Esta misma le quedaría siempre reconocida a su padre adoptivo y éste sería bien atendido hasta el fin de su vida, como lo merecía por su noble conducta para con la criatura.

¿No era una cosa bien hecha que gentes de un rango superior quitaran una pesada carga de las manos de un hombre de condición más humilde?

Aquello le parecía muy conveniente a Godfrey por razones que él sólo conocía, y, siguiendo un error común, se imaginaba que aquella medida sería fácil de tomar porque tenía motivos particulares para desearlo. Era esa una forma algo grosera de apreciar las relaciones que existían entre Silas y Eppie. Pero conviene recordar que muchas de las impresiones que Godfrey podía recoger respecto de la clase obrera de su vecindad, eran tales como para favorecer en él la opinión de que los afectos profundos no se armonizaban con las manos callosas y los débiles medios de la existencia del pueblo. Por otra parte, no había tenido ocasión —suponiendo que hubiera sido capaz de esto— de penetrar íntimamente todo lo que era excepcional en la vida del tejedor. Sólo una falta de información suficiente podía determinar a Godfrey a alimentar deliberadamente un proyecto tan bárbaro. Su bondad natural había sobrevivido a la época depresiva de sus crueles deseos, y el elogio que Nancy hacía de su marido no reposaba del todo en una ilusión voluntaria.

—He tenido razón —se decía cuando rememoraba todas las escenas de discusión—, comprendo que tuve razón en responderle que no, bien que eso me fuera lo más penoso; pero ¡qué bien se ha comportado Godfrey a este respecto! Muchos maridos se hubieran enojado conmigo por haber resistido a sus deseos. Hubieran sido capaces de insinuar que habían tenido mala suerte al casarse conmigo. Godfrey, sin embargo,

no ha sido capaz de dirigirme una palabra dura. Sólo demuestra su disgusto cuando no lo puede ocultar; todo le parece tan vacío, ya lo sé; y las tierras… qué cosa tan distinta sería para él cuando va a vigilar su explotación si hiciera todo eso pensando en los hijos que van creciendo. Sin embargo, yo no me puedo quejar; quizás si se hubiera casado con otra mujer que le hubiera dado hijos le habría mortificado de otro modo.

La idea de esta posibilidad era el principal consuelo de Nancy. A fin de fortalecer esa idea se ingeniaba en tener por Godfrey una ternura más perfecta que la de que hubiera sido capaz cualquier otra esposa. Muy a pesar suyo se había visto obligada a afligirlo con la única negativa. Godfrey no permanecía insensible a los esfuerzos de aquel cariño, y no era injusto respecto a los motivos de la obstinación de Nancy. Era imposible que hubiera vivido con ella quince años, sin saber que los rasgos principales del carácter de su mujer eran un apego desinteresado a lo que es justo y una sinceridad pura como el rocío formado sobre las flores. En realidad, Godfrey sentía aquello con tanta mayor intensidad cuanto que su naturaleza indecisa, adversa a afrontar las dificultades por ser estas francas y sinceras, tenía un cierto temor respetuoso por aquella dulce esposa que espiaba los deseos de su marido con el deseo ardiente de obedecerle. Le parecía que no le podría revelar jamás a Nancy la verdad concerniente a Eppie. Jamás se repondría de la repulsión que le causaría la historia de aquel primer matrimonio si se la revelaba ahora, después de haber guardado el secreto tanto tiempo.

Y la joven, pensaba Godfrey, sería un objeto de repulsión para ella; la sola presencia de Eppie le sería penosa. Y quizás hasta el golpe asestado a la altivez de Nancy —altivez mezclada con su ignorancia del mal del mundo— sería demasiado fuerte para su constitución delicada. Puesto que se había casado con ella teniendo un secreto en el corazón, era preciso que guardara ese secreto hasta el fin. Hiciera lo que hiciera, debía abstenerse de abrir un abismo infranqueable entre él y la mujer que amaba desde hacía tantos años.

Sin embargo, ¿por qué no podía acostumbrarse a ver sin hijos un hogar que tal esposa embellecía? ¿Por qué su espíritu dirigía su vuelo inquieto hacia ese vacío, como si fuera la única causa por la cual su vida no era completamente feliz? Supongo que lo mismo les ocurre a todos los hombres y a todas las mujeres que llegan a cierta edad sin darse cuenta clara de que la felicidad completa no puede existir en la vida.

En la vaga tristeza de las horas sombrías del crepúsculo, el hombre descontento busca un objeto definido y lo encuentra en la privación de un bien del que nunca ha gozado. El hombre descontento si está sentado, meditando en su hogar, piensa con envidia en el padre cuya vuelta es acogida con voces infantiles, y si está sentado a su mesa, alrededor de la cual las pequeñas cabezas se elevan las unas por encima de las otras como plantas de almácigos, ve una negra preocupación cernerse tras de cada una de ellas y piensa que las impulsiones que impelen a los hombres a abandonar su libertad y a buscar cadenas, no son seguramente otra cosa más que un acceso de locura. En lo que concierne a Godfrey, había otras razones, para que esos pensamientos fueran continuamente infortunados por aquella circunstancia particular, por aquel vacío de su destino.

Su conciencia, que no estaba nunca en completo reposo con respecto a Eppie, le hacía ver ahora su hogar sin hijos bajo el aspecto de una justa retribución. Y como el tiempo transcurría y Nancy se negaba siempre a adoptar a Eppie, toda reparación de la falta de Godfrey se volvía cada vez más difícil.



Hacía ya cuatro años la tarde de aquel domingo, que no se había hecho alusión alguna a la adopción, y Nancy suponía que aquel asunto estaba enterrado para siempre.

—Me pregunto si pensará más o menos en ello al envejecer —se decía Nancy—; tengo miedo de que piense más. Las personas de edad sufren con no tener hijos: ¿qué sería de mi padre sin Priscila? Y si muero yo, Godfrey quedaría muy solo… él, que frecuenta tan poco a sus hermanos. Pero no quiero atormentarme en exceso, ni tratar de prever los acontecimientos: es preciso que haga lo mejor que pueda en el presente.

Al asaltarla este último pensamiento, Nancy se despertó de su meditación y volvió la mirada hacia la página abandonada durante mucho más tiempo del que imaginaba; porque muy luego la sorprendió la entrada de la sirvienta que llevaba el té. En realidad, era algo más temprano que de costumbre; pero Juana tenía sus razones.

—¿El señor ha entrado ya al patio, Juana?

—No, señora, todavía no —respondió Juana, acentuando ligeramente su respuesta, sin que su señora reparara en ello—. No sé si lo habréis notado, señora —prosiguió Juana después de un corto silencio—; pero la gente pasa corriendo frente a la ventana de la calle y todos se dirigen hacia el mismo lado. Me parece que ha sucedido algo. No hay ningún sirviente en el patio y por eso no he mandado ver lo que pasa. Subí hasta la buhardilla más alta pero no pude distinguir nada a causa de los árboles. Espero que no le haya sucedido nada malo a nadie, sin embargo.

—No ha de ser nada grave, esperémoslo —dijo Nancy—. Quizás se haya vuelto a escapar el toro del señor Snell como el otro día.

—Ojalá no le dé una cornada a nadie, entonces —dijo Juana no despreciando del todo una hipótesis cargada de calamidades imaginarias.

—A esta muchacha le da siempre por asustarme; me agradaría que Godfrey estuviera de vuelta.

Se encaminó a la ventana del frente, dirigió sus miradas lo más lejos que pudo con una inquietud que consideró muy luego como una niñería. En efecto, no se veía ya en el camino ninguna de las señales de agitación de que había hablado Juana, y era probable que Godfrey, en vez de seguir por la carretera, volviera más bien cortando los campos.

Permaneció, sin embargo, de pie mirando el apacible cementerio; las sombras de las tumbas se alargaban sobre los túmulos de césped brillante y, más lejos, los árboles del presbiterio estaban revestidos por los vivos colores del otoño. Ante una belleza tan tranquila de la naturaleza, la presencia de un temor vano que hacía sentir vivamente era como un cuervo que agita lentamente las alas surcando el aire lleno de sol. Nancy deseaba cada vez más el regreso de Godfrey.

XVIII

ALGUIEN ABRIÓ la puerta, en el otro extremo de la pieza; Nancy tuvo el presentimiento de que era su marido. Volvió la espalda a la ventana con los ojos llenos de alegría, porque el temor más grande de la esposa se había desvanecido.

—Amigo mío, me alegro de que estéis de vuelta —dijo adelantándose hacia él—. Comenzaba a estar…

Nancy se detuvo bruscamente, porque Godfrey se quitaba el sombrero con las manos trémulas y se volvía hacia su mujer con el rostro pálido y la mirada extraña y fría como si la viera realmente, como si la viera desempeñando un papel en una escena que ella misma no viera. Nancy posó una mano sobre el brazo de su marido, no atreviéndose a seguir hablando.

Godfrey, sin embargo, no reparó en aquel movimiento y se dejó caer en su sillón.

Juana ya estaba en la puerta con la hirviente caldera.

—Decid que se retire, ¿queréis? —repuso Godfrey.

Y cuando la puerta se volvió a cerrar, trató de hablar con más claridad.



—Sentaos, Nancy… aquí… —indicando una silla frente a él—. He vuelto así que pude, para impedir que alguna otra persona os contara lo sucedido. He experimentado una gran sacudida, pero temo más lo que vais a sentir vos.

—¿No se trata de mi padre o de Priscila? —dijo Nancy con los labios trémulos y juntando sus manos con fuerza sobre las rodillas.

—No, no se trata de una persona viva —dijo Godfrey, incapaz de usar de la habilidad prudente con que hubiera querido hacer su revelación—. Se trata de Dunstan… mi hermano Dunstan, a quien perdimos de vista hace diez y seis años. Lo hemos encontrado… hemos encontrado su cuerpo… su esqueleto.

El terror profundo que la mirada de Godfrey le había causado a Nancy, hizo que ella encontrara un alivio en aquellas palabras. Se sentó relativamente tranquila, para oír lo que él tenía todavía que decir.

Godfrey prosiguió:

—La cantera se ha secado bruscamente, supongo que a causa de un drenaje; y estaba allí… estaba allí desde hace diez y seis años; encajado sobre dos piedras… con su reloj y su sello, con mi látigo de caza de pomo de oro, que tiene mi nombre grabado. Lo tomó sin pedírmelo el día en que montó a *Relámpago*, para ir de caza, la última vez que lo vi.

Godfrey se detuvo; no era igualmente fácil revelar lo demás.

—¿Pensáis que se ahogó? —dijo Nancy, casi sorprendida de que su marido estuviera tan profundamente impresionado por lo que había pasado hace tantos años a un hermano al que no quería, respecto del cual sé había augurado algo peor.

—No, cayó en la cantera —dijo Godfrey con voz baja, pero claramente, como si quisiera expresar que el hecho implicaba algo más.

Poco después agregó:

—Dunstan fue quien robó a Silas Marner.

La sorpresa y la vergüenza hicieron afluir la sangre al rostro y al cuello de Nancy, que había sido educada en la creencia de que eran un deshonor hasta los crímenes de los parientes lejanos.

—¡Dios mío, Godfrey! —dijo con tono compasivo, porque inmediatamente pensó que su marido debía sentir el deshonor más vivamente aún que ella.

—El dinero estaba en la Cantera —prosiguió Godfrey—, todo el dinero del tejedor. Todo ha sido recogido y en este momento llevan el esqueleto al *Arco Iris*. Pero yo me vine a contároslo todo; no he podido contenerme, era preciso que lo supierais.

Permaneció silencioso, mirando al suelo durante largos minutos. Nancy hubiera pronunciado algunas palabras para mitigar aquella vergüenza de familia, si no hubiera sido contenida por el sentimiento instintivo de que Godfrey tenía todavía algo que decirle. Muy luego alzó los ojos y miró fijamente a Nancy, diciendo:

—Todo se descubre, Nancy, tarde o temprano. Cuando el Todopoderoso lo quiere, nuestros secretos son revelados. Yo he vivido con un secreto en el corazón; pero no quiero seguíroslo ocultando. No quisiera que os fuese revelado por otra persona que yo, no quisiera que lo descubrieseis después de mi muerte. Voy a decíroslo ahora mismo. Nunca tuve para ello bastante fuerza de voluntad; pero ahora sabré cumplir mi resolución.

El extremado terror de Nancy había vuelto. Sus ojos, llenos de espanto, se encontraron como en una crisis en que el efecto se hubiera suspendido.

—Nancy —dijo Godfrey lentamente—, cuando nos casamos, yo os oculté algo… algo que debí deciros. Aquella mujer que Marner encontró muerta entre la nieve… la madre de Eppie… aquella mísera mujer… aquella mujer era mi esposa. Eppie es mi hija.

Se detuvo temiendo el efecto de su confesión. Sin embargo, Nancy permaneció completamente tranquila en su asiento, salvo que sus miradas se dirigieron hacia el suelo, dejando de encontrarse con las de Godfrey. Estaba pálida y serena como una estatua de la meditación, con las manos unidas sobre las rodillas.

—Nunca volveréis a tener por mí la misma estima —dijo Godfrey un momento después, con voz algo trémula.

Nancy permaneció silenciosa.

—No debí dejar a la niña sin reconocerla; no debí ocultaros este secreto. Me era imposible soportar la idea de renunciar a vos, Nancy. Me vi obligado a casarme con aquella mujer, y eso me hizo sufrir mucho.

Nancy seguía siempre silenciosa, con la mirada baja. Godfrey casi esperaba verla ponerse de pie inmediatamente y decir que iba a volverse a casa de su padre. ¿Cómo podría mostrarse piadosa para con faltas que debían parecerle tan negras, dada la sencillez y serenidad de sus principios?

En fin, Nancy alzó los ojos hacia su marido y habló. No había ninguna indignación en su voz, sólo había

la expresión de un profundo pesar.

—Godfrey, si me hubierais dicho esto hace seis años, hubiéramos podido cumplir en parte nuestro deber para con la niña. ¿Creéis que me hubiera negado a recibirla, sabiendo que era nuestra hija?

En aquel momento Godfrey sintió toda la amargura de un error que no había sido solamente inútil, sino que había fallado su propio objeto. No había sabido apreciar a aquella mujer con la que había vivido tanto tiempo. Pero ella habló de nuevo y con más agitación que antes.

—Y además, Godfrey, si la hubiésemos traído entonces, si vos os hubierais encariñado con ella como debíais, ella me hubiera querido como a una madre y vos hubierais sido más feliz conmigo. Me hubiera sido más fácil soportar la muerte de mi nene y nuestra vida hubiera podido parecerse más a lo que antes pensábamos que sería.

Las lágrimas de Nancy empezaron a correr y ella cesó de hablar.

—Pero entonces no hubierais querido casaros conmigo, Nancy, si os lo hubiera dicho —replicó Godfrey, impulsado por la severidad de los reproches de su conciencia, a probarse a sí mismo que su conducta no había sido una locura completa—. Ahora os parece que me hubierais aceptado por esposo, pero no lo hubierais hecho en aquel momento con vuestra altivez y la de vuestro padre; os hubiera repugnado el tener relaciones conmigo, después de las revelaciones que os hubiera hecho.

—No sabría deciros cuál hubiera sido mi decisión a ese respecto, Godfrey. En todo caso, nunca me hubiera casado con otro. Pero yo no merecía que se hiciera daño a causa de mí; nada lo merece en este mundo. Ninguna cosa es tan buena como lo parece a primera vista; nuestra misma unión no lo es, ya lo veis.

Pasó una débil y triste sonrisa por la fisonomía de Nancy cuando pronunció estas últimas palabras.

—Soy un hombre peor de lo que pensabais, Nancy. ¿Podréis perdonarme algún día?

—El mal que me habéis causado no tiene mucha importancia, Godfrey, y ya está reparado; habéis sido bueno conmigo durante quince años. Es para con otra que sois culpable, y temo que vuestras faltas para con ella no puedan ser nunca borradas por completo.

—Pero nada nos impide adoptar a Eppie ahora —dijo Godfrey—. Ahora me importa poco que se sepa todo. Seré franco y sincero el resto de mi vida.

—Su presencia en casa no será ya lo que hubiera sido, ahora que Eppie es grande —dijo Nancy meneando tristemente la cabeza—. Pero tenéis el deber de reconocerla y de asegurar su suerte. Yo también cumpliré el deber para con ella y rogaré a Dios para conseguir que me quiera.

—Entonces, los dos iremos a casa de Silas Marner esta misma tarde, cuando todo esté ya tranquilo en las Canteras.

XIX

AQUELLA NOCHE, entre las ocho y las nueve, Eppie y Silas estaban sentados solos en su choza. Después de la gran sobreexcitación causada al tejedor por los sucesos de la tarde, había deseado vivamente aquella tranquilidad y hasta les había rogado a la señora Winthrop y a Aarón, que se habían quedado allí, naturalmente, cuando todos se marcharon, que lo dejaran solo con su hija. Aquella sobreexcitación no se había disipado todavía. No había hecho más que alcanzar ese grado en que la sensibilidad se vuelve tan delicada que hace intolerable todo estimulante exterior; ese grado en que no se siente fatiga sino más bien una intensidad de vida interior, bajo el imperio de la cual es imposible conciliar el sueño. Todo el que haya observado tales momentos en otras personas, recuerda el brillo de su mirada y la nitidez extraña que se esparce hasta sobre las facciones groseras a causa de esa influencia pasajera. Es algo como si gracias a una nueva sutileza del oído, capaz de percibir todas las voces espirituales, vibraciones de efectos maravillosos hubieran atravesado la pesada armazón mortal, como si la «belleza nacida del murmullo de los sonidos» hubiera pasado por la fisonomía del que los escucha.

El rostro de Silas anunciaba esa especie de transfiguración cuando al quedar solos se puso a mirar a Eppie, sentado en su sillón. La joven había acercado su silla cerca de las rodillas de Marner y se había inclinado hacia adelante teniendo ambas manos de su padre adoptivo entre las suyas y con los ojos alzados hacia él. Próximo a ellos, en la mesa, iluminada por una vela, se encontraba el oro recobrado, el oro tanto tiempo amado, dispuesto en pilas regulares, como Silas tenía costumbre de ponerlo en los días en que aquel metal era su única alegría. Acababa de mostrarle a Eppie cómo tenía la costumbre de contarlo todas las noches y cuál había sido la desolación extrema de su alma hasta que su hija le fue enviada.

—En un principio —le decía en voz baja— tenía de tiempo en tiempo como el presentimiento de que vos podríais tomar la forma de mi oro; porque adondequiera que volviera la cabeza me parecía ver mi tesoro, y pensaba que me sentiría feliz si pudiera tocarlo y convencerme de que había vuelto. Pero esto no duró. Al cabo de poco tiempo hubiera pensado que me había herido una nueva maldición, si el oro os hubiera alejado de mí. Había llegado a tanto la necesidad de vuestras miradas, de vuestra voz y del tacto de vuestros pequeños dedos. Vos no sabíais cuando erais muy pequeña, vos no sabíais lo que vuestro viejo padre Silas sentía por vos.

—Pero ahora lo sé, padre mío —dijo Eppie—. Si no hubiera sido por vos me hubieran llevado al asilo de los pobres y no hubiera habido nadie que me quisiera.

—¡Ah!, querida mía, la bendición ha sido para mí. Si vos no me hubierais sido enviada para salvarme, hubiera descendido a la tumba con mi miseria. El dinero me fue quitado a tiempo, y ya veis que ha sido conservado, hasta que lo necesitáramos para vos. Es maravilloso… nuestra vida es maravillosa.

Silas permaneció sentado, en silencio, contemplando durante algunos instantes el tesoro.

—Ahora ya no me seduce —dijo con aire pensativo—; no, ciertamente que no. Me pregunto si volvería a tener ese poder en el caso, Eppie, en que os perdiera, y lo dudo. Pero podría ser inducido a creer que ha sido de nuevo abandonado y a perder el sentimiento de que Dios ha sido bueno para conmigo.

En aquel instante golpearon a la puerta y Eppie se vio obligada a levantarse sin responderle a Silas. ¡Qué bella parecía! Lágrimas de ternura le llenaban los ojos y un ligero sonrojo teñía sus mejillas cuando se adelantó para abrir. Aquel sonrojo se hizo más intenso al ver al señor Godfrey Cass y a su señora. Hizo su ligera reverencia rústica y abrió del todo la puerta para dejarlos pasar.

—Os venimos a molestar muy tarde, querida —dijo la señora Cass, tomando la mano de Eppie, mirándole el rostro con expresión admirativa y de vivo interés.

La misma Nancy estaba pálida y trémula.

Eppie, después de haber acercado sillas para el señor Cass y su señora, fue a ponerse de pie junto a Silas

y frente a ellos.

—¿Qué tal, Marner? —dijo Godfrey, tratando de hablar con plena seguridad—, es para mí un gran consuelo al volveros a ver en posesión del dinero de que bebíais sido privado hace tantos años. Fue un miembro de mi familia el que os causó ese daño; eso agrava mi pesar y me siento obligado a repararlo por todos los medios de que dispongo. Todo lo que haga por vos no será más que saldar una deuda, aun cuando sólo considerara el robo. Pero hay otras cosas, Marner, por las que estoy y estaré siempre grato.



Godfrey se detuvo. Él y su mujer habían convenido que el asunto de la paternidad no sería abordado sino con mucha prudencia y si era posible que la revelación quedara reservada para más tarde, de manera de no hacérsela más que gradualmente a Eppie. Nancy había insistido respecto a ese punto, porque presentía vivamente el aspecto doloroso bajo el cual la joven no dejaría de considerar las relaciones que habían existido entre su padre y su madre.

Silas, siempre cohibido cuando le dirigían la palabra «superiores» tales como el señor Cass —hombres grandes, poderosos, de tez fuertemente encendida y que se veían sobre todo a caballo—, respondió con alguna dificultad:

—Señor, tengo que agradeceros ya muchas cosas. En cuanto al robo, no lo considero como una pérdida para mí. Y, si lo hiciera, vos no tendríais nada que ver en ello: vos no tenéis responsabilidad alguna.

—Vos tenéis el derecho de considerar el asunto de ese modo, Marner; pero yo no lo podré hacer nunca. Espero que me dejaréis proceder de acuerdo con mis sentimientos de justicia. Yo sé que vos os contentáis fácilmente: sois un hombre que ha trabajado duro toda su vida.

—Sí, señor —dijo Marner con acento meditativo—. No hubiera sido feliz sin mi trabajo: eso fue lo que me sostuvo cuando todo lo demás me abandonó.

—¡Ah! —dijo Godfrey aplicando exclusivamente las palabras de Marner a las necesidades materiales del tejedor—. Vuestro oficio ha sido útil en este país, porque hay muchos tejidos que hacer; pero habéis llegado a una edad algo avanzada para ese trabajo asiduo, Marner. Es tiempo de que os retiréis y descanséis un poco. Parecéis muy quebrantado aunque no seáis un anciano, me parece.

—Tengo cincuenta y cinco años, casi seguramente —dijo Silas.

—¡Oh, entonces, podéis vivir todavía treinta años! ¡Fijaos en el viejo Macey! Y ese dinero que tenéis sobre la mesa es al fin y al cabo poca cosa. No durará mucho de una manera o de otra, que lo coloquéis a interés o que lo vayáis gastando. No duraría mucho, aunque no tuvierais que pensar sino en vos… y tenéis que sostener dos personas desde hace muchos años. Deseamos ayudaros.

—¡Ah! Señor —dijo Silas, insensible a todo lo que decía Godfrey—, no temo la necesidad, Eppie y yo siempre hemos de saber vencer las dificultades. Hay pocos obreros que cuenten con tantas economías. Yo sé lo que representa este dinero para la gente acomodada; pero a mis ojos es mucho, es demasiado. Y nosotros dos necesitamos muy poca cosa.

—Solamente un jardincito, papá —dijo Eppie sonrojándose en seguida hasta las orejas.

—¿Un jardín os agradaría, querida? —dijo Nancy, pensando que aquel cambio de tema pudiera serle favorable a su marido—. Nos podríamos entender sobre ese punto… yo consagro mucho tiempo al nuestro.

—¡Ah!, se trabaja mucho en los jardines de la Casa Roja —dijo Godfrey, sorprendido por lo difícil que le era abordar una proposición que, de lejos, le había parecido muy fácil—. Os habéis conducido muy bien con Eppie, Marner, desde hace diez y seis años. ¿Os agradaría mucho verla en una situación cómoda, verdad? Parece una hermosa muchacha, en buena salud, pero incapaz de soportar ninguna fatiga. No parece una moza vigorosa, hija de padres obreros. Os sería agradable verla objeto de los cuidados de aquellos que pueden darle fortuna y hacer de ella una dama. Es más apta para eso que para una existencia penosa, como la que podía tener que llevar dentro de algunos años.

Un ligero sonrojo se esparció por el rostro de Marner y desapareció como una luz efímera. Eppie sólo se sorprendía de que el señor Cass hablara así de cosas que no tenían nada de común con la realidad. En cuanto a Silas, se sentía incomodado y ofendido.

—No veo, señor, adónde queréis ir a parar —respondió, no ocurriéndosele las palabras adecuadas para expresar los sentimientos complejos que experimentara mientras oía hablar al señor Cass.

—Pues bien, he aquí lo que quiero decir, Marner —replicó Godfrey, resuelto a abordar el caso—. Mi mujer y yo, ya lo sabéis, no tenemos hijos. No tenemos a nadie quien pueda aprovechar la holgura de nuestra casa y todo lo que poseemos además de eso, que es más de lo que necesitamos. Quisiéramos, pues, tener a alguien que nos sirviera de hija. Desearíamos tener a Eppie y tratarla bajo todos conceptos como si fuera nuestra. Me parece que sería un gran consuelo para vuestra vejez al ver su fortuna asegurada de este modo, después de haberos sacrificado tanto para criarla tan bien. Nada más justo que seáis plenamente recompensado. Y Eppie, estoy seguro, os amará siempre, y siempre os quedará agradecida. Vendrá a veros a menudo y no dejaremos escapar ninguna ocasión de hacer cuanto podamos para que seáis feliz.

Un hombre sencillo, como era Godfrey Cass, al hablar bajo la influencia de alguna dificultad, balbucea necesariamente expresiones más groseras que sus intenciones y que tienen que rozar sentimientos delicados.

Mientras que él hablaba, Eppie había posado tranquilamente su brazo tras de la cabeza de Silas y su mano cariñosa se había apoyado en su hombro; de modo que sintió que el viejo temblaba con violencia.

Cuando el señor Cass hubo terminado, el tejedor permaneció silencioso durante unos momentos, habiendo perdido toda energía en un conflicto de emociones, todas igualmente penosas. El corazón de Eppie se oprimía al pensar que su padre estaba afligido. Estaba a punto de inclinarse para hablarle, cuando una angustia violenta dominó por fin todas las que luchaban en el alma de Silas. Entonces dijo con voz débil:

—Eppie, hija mía, hablad. Yo no quiero impedir vuestra felicidad. Dad las gracias al señor y a la señora Cass.

Eppie quitó el brazo de atrás de la cabeza del tejedor y adelantó un paso. Sus mejillas estaban encendidas, pero no era de falso rubor: la idea de que su padre estaba sumido en la duda y la angustia le había quitado esa especie de conciencia de sí misma. Hizo una profunda reverencia primero a la señora Cass, luego al señor Cass y les dijo:

—Gracias, señora; gracias, señor; pero yo no puedo separarme de mi padre, ni reconocer a nadie que me fuera superior que él. Tampoco deseo ser una dama. Gracias de todos modos. —Eppie hizo al llegar aquí una reverencia—, y no podría abandonar a las gentes con que me he habituado a vivir.

Los labios de Eppie se pusieron a temblar un poco al decir las últimas palabras. Se retiró otra vez tras de la silla de su padre, le pasó el brazo alrededor del cuello, mientras que Silas, reprimiendo un sollozo, tendía la mano para oprimir la de su hija.

Nancy tenía los ojos llenos de lágrimas, pero su simpatía por Eppie se mezclaba naturalmente con la angustia que le causaba la situación de su marido. No se atrevió a hablar, preguntándose qué pasaría en el espíritu de Godfrey. Éste sentía esa especie de irritación que se manifiesta inevitablemente en casi todos nosotros cuando encontramos un obstáculo imprevisto. Se había sentido penetrado de arrepentimiento y con la resolución necesaria para reparar su falta, en toda la medida que el tiempo podría consentírselo. Era movido por sentimientos del todo excepcionales que debían fincar en una regla de conducta determinada de antemano, y que había escogido por parecerle la más justa, así es que no estaba dispuesto a apreciar con satisfacción los sentimientos ajenos que venían a contrariar sus resoluciones virtuosas. La agitación bajo cuya inspiración habló de nuevo no estaba exenta de un asomo de cólera.

—Pero yo tengo sobre vos, Eppie, el más grande de todos los derechos. Tengo el deber, Marner, de reconocer a Eppie como hija mía y darle la situación que le corresponde. Es mi hija: su madre era mi esposa. Tengo sobre ella un derecho legítimo.

Eppie se había estremecido con violencia y se puso intensamente pálida. Silas, por el contrario, se sintió aliviado por la respuesta de Eppie del terrible temor de que sus intenciones fueran opuestas a las de su hija. Sintió que el espíritu de resistencia se había pronunciado en él, no sin provocar, sin embargo, un ligero movimiento de cólera paternal.

—Entonces, señor —respondió con un acento de amargura que había quedado callado en su alma desde el día memorable en que habían quedado destruidas las esperanzas de su juventud—; entonces, señor, ¿por qué no dijisteis eso hace diez y seis años? ¿Por qué no la reclamasteis antes de que llegase a quererla, en lugar de venir a tomármela en este momento? Lo mismo podríais quererme arrancar el corazón del pecho. Dios me la dio porque vos la abandonasteis como hija; no tenéis ningún derecho sobre ella. Cuando un hombre aleja un bien de su puerta, ese bien es de los que lo recogen en su casa.

—Tenéis razón, Marner: hice mal, me he arrepentido de mi conducta a ese respecto —dijo Godfrey, que no pudo menos que sentir el filo de las palabras de Silas.

—Me alegro de saberlo —dijo Marner, cuya agitación aumentaba—; pero el arrepentimiento no puede modificar lo que ha durado diez y seis años. Viniendo a decir ahora «yo soy su padre», no destruís los sentimientos de nuestros corazones. A mí es a quien ha llamado padre desde que pudo pronunciar esta palabra.

—Me parece que podríais considerar el asunto de un modo más justo, Marner —dijo Godfrey, a quien las palabras verdaderas y formales del tejedor acababan de sorprender y de infundir un sentimiento respetuoso —. No es como si os la fuese a quitar por completo y no debierais volverla a ver. Estará muy cerca de vos y vendrá aquí muy a menudo. Tendrá siempre para vos los mismos sentimientos.

—Exactamente los mismos sentimientos —repuso Marner con más amargura que nunca—. ¿Cómo podría tener los mismos sentimientos que hoy cuando comemos los mismos bocados, bebemos en la misma copa y pensamos en las mismas cosas desde el principio hasta el fin del día? Exactamente los mismos sentimientos. ¡Ésas son vanas palabras! Nos cortaríamos en dos.

Godfrey, a quien la experiencia no había preparado para comprender todo el alcance de las sencillas palabras de Marner, volvió a ser presa de una gran irritación. Le pareció que el tejedor era muy egoísta, juicio que fácilmente forman aquellos que no han puesto nunca a prueba su fuerza de renunciamiento al

oponerse a un acto que, sin duda alguna, debía de hacer la felicidad de Eppie, y sintió que tenía el deber de manifestar su autoridad, por amor a su hija.

—Yo hubiera pensado, Marner —dijo con tono severo—, que vuestro afecto por Eppie os haría ver con regocijo una cosa de que depende su felicidad, aunque eso os obligara a hacer algún sacrificio. Debierais acordaros de que vuestra vida es incierta y que Eppie ha llegado ahora a una edad en que su suerte puede pronto resolverse de una manera muy distinta de lo que sucedería en casa de su padre. Si llega a casarse con algún humilde obrero, entonces, haga lo que hiciera por ella, ya no dependerá de mí el hacerla feliz. Vos le cerráis el camino del bienestar, y aunque me sea penoso ofenderos después de lo que vos habéis hecho y yo no hice, comprendo que ahora tengo la obligación de insistir en velar por mi hija. Quiero cumplir con ese deber.

Es difícil decir quién se sintió más profundamente agitado: si Silas o Eppie, con las últimas palabras de Godfrey. Los pensamientos de Eppie se habían sucedido muy activos, mientras que oía la discusión entre el padre a quien amaba desde hacía mucho tiempo y aquel nuevo padre desconocido, aquel nuevo padre que bruscamente había venido a ocupar el sitio de la sombra negra e indecisa que había puesto el anillo nupcial en el dedo de su madre.

Su imaginación se había transportado al pasado y al porvenir y se había entregado a conjeturas y a previsiones para comprender lo que significaba aquella paternidad revelada. Además, en las últimas palabras de Godfrey había algunas que contribuían a definir claramente aquellas previsiones. No era que sus pensamientos sobre el pasado o el porvenir hubieran tenido una influencia decisiva sobre la resolución de Eppie, porque esa resolución había sido fijada por los sentimientos que vibraban al sonido de cada una de las palabras proferidas por Silas. Pero, aun fuera de estos sentimientos, la doble corriente de las reflexiones de la joven hizo nacer en ella una repulsión por la suerte que se le ofreció y por aquel padre que se acababa de revelar.

La conciencia de Silas, por otra parte, se sentía de nuevo atormentada. Lo embargaba el temor de que la acusación de Godfrey fuera cierta y que su propia voluntad se elevara como un obstáculo ante la felicidad de Eppie. Durante algunos instantes permaneció silencioso, luchando consigo mismo, porque quería dominarse antes de hablar. Por fin, las palabras salieron trémulas de su boca:

—No diré nada más. Será como queráis. Habladle a la niña. Yo no quiero impedir nada.

La propia Nancy, a pesar de toda la sensibilidad delicada de su corazón, compartía la opinión de su marido de que el deseo de Marner de guardar a Eppie no era justificado, después que el verdadero padre de ésta se había hecho reconocer. Comprendía que la prueba era muy dura para el tejedor, pero sus principios personales no le permitían dudar que un padre legítimo no tuviera derechos superiores a los de un padre adoptivo, sea quienquiera. Por otra parte, Nancy, que había sido acostumbrada a no carecer de nada y a gozar de los privilegios de una posición honorable, no podía apreciar los placeres que la primera educación y los primeros hábitos asocian con todos los fines y todos los esfuerzos de los pobres de nacimiento. Ante sus ojos, Eppie, al recobrar los derechos de la sangre, entraba en posesión de un bienestar incontestable, del que había estado privada demasiado tiempo. Por esto oyó las últimas palabras de Silas con alivio y había pensado, como Godfrey, que su deseo iba a quedar satisfecho.

—Eppie, mi querida —dijo Godfrey, mirando a su hija, no sin cierta confusión al pensar que tenía bastante edad para juzgarla—, nosotros desearíamos que siempre demostrarais afectos y gratitud a un hombre que os ha servido de padre durante tantos años, y nos esforzaremos en ayudaros a hacerle feliz. Pero esperamos que llegaréis a amarnos como le amáis, y bien que yo no haya sido lo que un padre debiera ser para vos desde mucho tiempo, quiero hacer todo lo que pueda por vos hasta mi muerte, y dotaros como a mi hija única. Tendréis en mi mujer la mejor de las madres; es esa una felicidad que no habéis conocido desde que estáis en edad de poder apreciarla.

—Mi querida, seréis un tesoro para mí —dijo Nancy con su voz suave—. No nos faltará nada cuando tengamos a nuestra hija.

Eppie no volvió a adelantarse para inclinarse otra vez ante el señor Cass y su señora. Tenía la mano de Silas en la suya, oprimiéndola con fuerza; era una mano de tejedor, cuya palma y la yema de los dedos eran sensibles a tal presión. Al mismo tiempo, la joven habló con tono más decidido y más frío que antes.

—Gracias, señora; gracias, señor, por vuestros ofrecimientos; son muy hermosos y muy por encima de mis deseos; pero no podría tener un momento de alegría en la vida si me viera obligada a separarme de mi padre y si lo supiera sentado en nuestra casa pensando en mí y sufriendo en la soledad. Hemos estado acostumbrados a ser felices juntos todos los días, y no puedo concebir ninguna felicidad sin él. El dice que no tenía a nadie en el mundo antes de que yo le fuese enviada, y que no tendría a nadie si yo lo dejara. Cuidó de mí y me quiso desde el principio; yo le quedaré adicta mientras viva, y nadie se interpondrá entre

él y yo.

—Pero es preciso que estéis segura, Eppie —dijo Silas en voz baja—, es preciso que estéis segura de que jamás os arrepentiréis de haber preferido quedaros entre pobres gentes que no poseen más que malas ropas y cosas mediocres, cuando de vos dependía el obtener todo lo que hay de mejor.

Su susceptibilidad a este respecto había aumentado, mientras escuchaba las palabras sinceras y afectuosas de Eppie.

—Nunca podré arrepentirme, padre mío —dijo la joven—. No sabría en qué pensar ni qué desear viéndome rodeada de bellas cosas a que no he estado acostumbrada. Y sería para mí una triste tarea el vestir hermosas ropas, ir en cabriolé y sentarme en un sitio reservado en la iglesia, si todo eso hiciera pensar a aquéllos a quienes amo, que mi compañía no les conviene. ¿En qué podría entonces interesarme?

Nancy interrogó a Godfrey con una mirada dolorosa; pero los ojos de éste estaban fijos en el suelo, en el sitio en que agitaba la punta de su bastón, como si estuviera ocupado distraídamente en algo. Entonces pensó que había una frase que sentaría mejor en sus labios que en los de su marido.

—Lo que decís es natural, querida criatura; es natural que tengáis cariño a aquellos que os han criado —dijo con dulzura—; sin embargo, tenéis un deber que llenar para con vuestro padre legítimo. Quizá no sólo no tengáis que resignaros a hacer un sacrificio. Desde que vuestro padre os abre su casa, me parece que no es razonable que vos la huyáis.

—Yo no puedo figurarme que tengo otro padre que el mío —dijo Eppie con impetuosidad, saltándosele las lágrimas de los ojos—. Mi sueño ha sido siempre tener un pequeño hogar en el que él estaría sentado junto al fuego, mientras que yo trabajaría y haría todo lo necesario por él. No puedo imaginarme otra casa más que la nuestra. No he sido criada para ser una dama y no puedo acostumbrarme a esta idea. Amo a los obreros, su alimento y sus costumbres —y terminó con acento vehemente, mientras que sus lágrimas caían —: Soy la novia de un obrero que vivirá junto con mi padre y que me ayudará a cuidarle.

Godfrey fijó la vista en Nancy; tenía el rostro encendido y sus ojos dilatados le ardían. Aquel fracaso de un proyecto que había acariciado con la alta idea de que iba en cierto modo a rescatar la gran falta de su vida, le hizo encontrar sofocante el aire de la pieza.

—Vámonos, Nancy —dijo en voz baja.

—No hablaremos más de esto por hoy —dijo Nancy poniéndose de pie—. Os tenemos mucho cariño a vos, mi querida, y a vos también, Marner. Volveremos a veros, ahora se hace tarde.

De este modo justificó la brusca partida de su marido, porque Godfrey se había dirigido derecho hacia la puerta, incapaz de decir una palabra más.

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NANCY Y Godfrey se volvieron a su casa en silencio, bajo la luz de las estrellas. Cuando entraron al salón artesonado de encina, Godfrey se dejó caer en su sillón, mientras que Nancy, después de haberse quitado su sombrero y su chal, fue a colocarse a su lado junto a la estufa porque no quería separarse de él ni aun algunos minutos. Sin embargo, temía proferir alguna palabra que pudiera rozar los sentimientos de su esposo. Por último, Godfrey volvió la cabeza hacia Nancy y sus ojos se encontraron y quedaron fijos sin que el uno ni la otra hicieran ningún movimiento. Aquella mirada tranquila y recíproca del marido y de la esposa que tienen confianza mutua, era como el primer momento de reposo o de seguridad después de una gran fatiga o de un gran peligro. No debía ser turbado ni por palabra ni por ademanes que impidieran sentir los primeros goces del apaciguamiento.

Pero muy luego Godfrey le tendió la mano, y al entregarle Nancy la suya, atrajo a su mujer hacia sí, y dijo:

—¡Todo ha concluido!

Siempre de pie al lado de él, Nancy se inclinó para darle un beso; luego le dijo:

—Sí, temo que nos veamos obligados a renunciar a la esperanza de tenerla por hija. No sería razonable que quisiéramos hacerla venir a nuestra casa contra su voluntad. No podemos cambiar su educación ni el resultado de ella.

—No —respondió Godfrey con un acento claro y decisivo que contrastaba con su palabra generalmente negligente y floja—. Hay deudas que no es posible pagar como las deudas de dinero, dando una compensación por los años transcurridos. Mientras que yo difería continuamente, los árboles han crecido… Ahora es demasiado tarde. Marner tenía razón en lo que decía respecto del hombre que aleja de su puerta una bendición; esa bendición le toca a otra persona. Antes, Nancy, quise pasar por no tener hijos. Hoy pasaré contra mi voluntad por no tenerlos.

Nancy no habló en seguida, pero un momento después preguntó:

—¿No dirás entonces que Eppie es vuestra hija?



—No; ¿qué bien resultaría de eso para nadie?… al contrario, sería un mal. Haré por ella todo lo que pueda en la condición que ha escogido. Pero es necesario que sepa con quién tiene la intención de casarse.

—Si no hay utilidad en decir eso —repuso Nancy, que ahora se creía autorizada, para aliviarse, a dar paso a un sentimiento que había tratado de sofocar hasta entonces—, os agradeceré que le evitéis a papá y a Priscila el pesar de saber las cosas del pasado, salvo lo concerniente a Dunsey, porque esto no se puede evitar…

—Lo diré en mi testamento… creo que lo diré en mi testamento. No me agradaría que se descubriera nada después de mi muerte; como ese asunto relativo a Dunsey —dijo Godfrey con aire meditabundo—. Pero sólo vería surgir dificultades si hablara ahora. Es necesario que haga lo posible para que Eppie sea feliz a su manera. Se me ocurre una idea —agregó, después de detenerse un instante—. Aarón Winthrop es su novio, es a él a quien quiso referirse. Recuerdo que vi a ese joven volviendo de la iglesia con ella y con Marner.

—Pues bien; es muy sobrio y laborioso —dijo Nancy, tratando de encarar las cosas del modo más favorable que era posible.

Godfrey volvió a caer en sus reflexiones. En seguida miró a Nancy con tristeza y dijo:

—Es una joven muy graciosa y bonita, ¿no es verdad, Nancy?

—Sí, amigo mío, tiene vuestros cabellos y vuestros ojos; me sorprendió que eso no me hubiera llamado la atención antes.

—Me parece que me tomó aversión al saber que era su padre; noté que cambiaba de actitud al oír mi declaración.

—Le fue imposible soportar la idea de no considerar a Marner como su padre —dijo Nancy, que no deseaba confirmar la dolorosa impresión de su marido.

—Ella se imagina que yo procedí con su madre así como con ella misma. Me cree peor de lo que soy. Pero no hay medio de impedir que así lo crea; jamás podrá saberlo todo. Es una parte de mi castigo, Nancy, que mi hija sienta aversión por mí. No hubiera tenido nunca estos disgustos si hubiera sido sincero para con vos; si no hubiera sido un insensato. Yo no tenía derecho a esperar sino males de semejante casamiento, sobre todo evitando el cumplir mis deberes de padre.

Nancy permanecía silenciosa; su espíritu lleno de rectitud no le permitía que tratara de embotar la punta aguda de lo que consideraba como un justo remordimiento; un acento de cariño templaba el tono que había tomado para acusarse a sí mismo.

—Y os obtuve, a pesar de todo, Nancy. Sin embargo, he murmurado, he estado descontento porque me faltaba otro bien, como si lo mereciera.

—Jamás faltasteis a vuestro deber para conmigo, Godfrey —dijo Nancy con una sinceridad tranquila—. Mi sola pena desaparecerá si os resignáis a la suerte que os ha tocado.

—Pues bien, quizás sea tiempo aún de que me reforme bajo ese respecto; bien que sea demasiado tarde para hacer ciertas cosas, a pesar de lo que dice el porvenir.

XXI

AL DÍA siguiente, cuando estaban almorzando, Silas dijo a Eppie:

—Hay una cosa, Eppie, que tengo la intención de hacer desde hace dos años. Ahora que el dinero nos ha vuelto, la podemos poner en ejecución. He reflexionado en ello mil veces esta noche, y como los días hermosos duran todavía, me parece que partiremos mañana. Dejaremos la casa y todo lo demás al cuidado de vuestra madrina; haremos un pequeño equipaje y nos pondremos en camino.

—¿Para ir a dónde, papaíto? —dijo Eppie muy sorprendida.

—A mi antiguo país… a la ciudad en que nací… al Patio de la Linterna. Deseo ver al señor Paston, el pastor; quizá se haya descubierto algún indicio que haya permitido reconocer que yo era inocente del robo. El señor Paston era un hombre que tenía muchas luces. Quiero conversarle también de la costumbre de «echar a la suerte». También me gustaría hablar de la religión de aquí, porque me inclino a creer que no la conoce.

Eppie se puso muy contenta. Había para ella no sólo la perspectiva de la sorpresa y del placer de ver un nuevo pueblo, sino la de volver a contarle a Aarón todo lo que hubiera visto y oído. Aarón era tanto más instruido que ella en todas las cosas, que le sería muy agradable tener esa pequeña ventaja respecto de él. La señora Winthrop, que tenía un temor vago de los peligros inherentes a un viaje tan largo, exigió que le dieran la seguridad de que los viajeros no irían más allá de las regiones servidas por las diligencias y las lentas carretas. Estaba muy contenta, sin embargo, de que Silas volviera a ver su pueblo y descubrir si lo habían justificado de la falsa acusación de que había sido objeto.

—Así tendríais el espíritu más tranquilo durante el resto de vuestra vida, maese Marner —dijo Dolly—, estoy segura. Y si hay medio de obtener algunas luces en el Patio de la Linterna de que habláis, como tenemos necesidad de ellas en este mundo, yo misma me alegraré de que podáis traerlas con vos.

En fin, cuatro días después Silas y Eppie, vestidos con sus ropas del domingo y con un lío envuelto en un pañuelo de tela azul, atravesaban las calles de una gran ciudad manufacturera. Silas, desorientado por los cambios que un lapso de treinta años había introducido en su ciudad natal, acababa de detener sucesivamente a varias personas para preguntarles el nombre de la ciudad y convencerse de que no estaba bajo la influencia de un error.

—Preguntad dónde queda el Patio de la Linterna, padre, preguntádselo a ese señor que tiene agujetas en el hombro y que está parado en la puerta de esa tienda. No está apurado como los otros —agregó Eppie, bastante afligida por la perplejidad de su padre, y, además, bastante cohibido en medio del ruido, del movimiento y de la multitud de fisonomías extrañas e indiferentes.

—¡Ah!, hija mía, no sabrá decir nada —dijo Silas—; las gentes de la burguesía no iban nunca al Patio de la Linterna, pero quizá alguien sepa decirme dónde queda la casa de la Prisión, en la que se encuentra la cárcel. Conozco mi camino desde allí, como si lo hubiese visto ayer.

Llegaron con bastante dificultad a la calle de la Prisión, después de dar muchas vueltas y preguntando muchas veces el camino. Los muros repulsivos de la cárcel fue el primer objeto que correspondiera con alguna imagen en la memoria de Silas, dándole la alegre certidumbre que no le había proporcionado ninguna seguridad relativa al hombre de la ciudad, que estaba en el lugar de su nacimiento.



—¡Ah! —dijo respirando largamente—, ésa es la cárcel, Eppie; no ha cambiado nada; ahora yo no estoy inquieto. Es la tercera calle a la izquierda, más allá de las puertas. Éste es el camino que debemos seguir.

—¡Oh!, ¡qué feo sitio tan sombrío! —dijo Eppie—. ¡Cómo oculta el cielo! Es peor que el asilo de pobres de Raveloe. Me alegro mucho de que no viváis más en esta ciudad, padre. ¿El Patio de la Linterna es como esta calle?

—Mi querida hija —dijo Silas sonriendo—; no es una calle ancha como ésta. Yo tampoco me sentí nunca a gusto en esta calle grande; pero me gustaba el Patio de la Linterna. Aquí me parece que están cambiadas todas las tiendas; no las reconozco, pero reconoceré la calle porque es la tercera. Ésta es —dijo con acento de satisfacción al llegar a un pasaje estrecho—. Ahora tenemos que tomar de nuevo a la izquierda y después seguir derecho durante un corto trecho, subiendo la calle de los Zapatos; entonces estaremos en la entrada del Patio, junto a la ventana saliente. En ese sitio hay un arroyo en la calle para permitir que corra el agua. ¡Ah!, ¡me parece que veo todo eso!

—¡Oh!, papá, me siento como si me ahogara. No hubiera podido creer que hubiese gente que viviera de este modo, tan aglomerada. ¡Qué lindas nos van a parecer las Canteras al regresar!

—Hija mía, a mí también me parece esto feo ahora, y además hay mal olor. No puedo convencerme de que el olor fuera antes tan desagradable.

Aquí y allí, la cara lívida y sucia de algún vecino miraba a los extranjeros desde el paso obscuro de las puertas, y aumentaba la inquietud de Eppie. De modo que sintió un alivio que desde hacía rato deseaba cuando salieron de los pasajes estrechos para penetrar en la calle de los Zapatos, en la que se veía una faja más ancha de cielo.

—¡Oh! ¡Dios mío! —dijo Silas—; esas gentes salen del Patio de la Linterna como si volvieran de la capilla, a esta hora del día, a las doce, un día de trabajo.

De pronto se estremeció y permaneció inmóvil, con la mirada perdida y desesperada que alarmó a Eppie. Se encontraban delante de una entrada, frente a una gran manufactura. De aquella entrada salían oleadas de hombres y de mujeres, que iban a hacer su comida de mediodía.

—Padre —dijo Eppie, tomándole de los brazos—, ¿qué os sucede?

Pero tuvo que hablarle varias veces seguidas antes de que él acertara a responderle.

—Ha desaparecido, hija —dijo al fin, con una agitación violenta—. El Patio de la Linterna ha desaparecido. Es aquí donde debía alzarse, porque ésta es la ventana salediza. La reconozco, no la han cambiado; pero han hecho esa nueva entrada; y, además, esa gran manufactura. Todo el Patio ha desaparecido, la capilla y todo lo demás.

—Venid a sentaros en esta tienda de cepillos, papá, os lo permitirán —dijo Eppie, siempre sobre el quién vive, con el temor de que su padre fuera a ser presa de uno de sus extraños ataques—. Quizás los dueños puedan deciros todo lo que ha pasado.

Pero ni el vendedor de cepillos que vivía en la calle de los Zapatos desde hacía diez años, cuando la fábrica ya había sido construida, ni ninguna otra persona a quien Silas tuvo ocasión de dirigirse, pudieron darle el menor dato sobre sus antiguos amigos del Patio de la Linterna, o sobre el señor Paston, el pastor.

—Toda la vieja plaza ha desaparecido —dijo Silas a Dolly Winthrop, la tarde que regresaron—, el pequeño cementerio y todo lo demás. Mi antigua casa ya no existe, ahora no tengo más que ésta. Nunca sabré si se descubrió la verdad respecto del robo, ni si el señor Paston hubiera sido capaz de darme algunos esclarecimientos sobre la costumbre de echar a la suerte. Todo eso está obscuro para mí, señora Winthrop y mucho me temo que así suceda hasta el fin.

—Pues, sí, maese Marner —dijo Dolly, que estaba sentada escuchándole, con su rostro tranquilo, ahora encuadrado de cabellos canos—, yo también temo; es la voluntad de Aquel que está allá arriba, que muchas cosas permanezcan obscuras para nosotros; pero hay algunas que nunca lo han estado para mí; son principalmente las que me vienen al espíritu durante el trabajo del día. Habéis sido duramente puesto a prueba esta vez, maese Marner, y me parece que nunca sabréis la verdadera razón; sin embargo, eso no quita que esa razón exista, bien que la cosa sea obscura para vos y para mí.

—No —dijo Silas—, no; eso no quita que exista. Desde la época en que la niña me fue enviada y en que comencé a quererla como si fuera mía, recibí bastantes luces para tener confianza, y ahora que ella dice que no me dejará nunca, creo que tendré confianza hasta mi muerte.

Conclusión

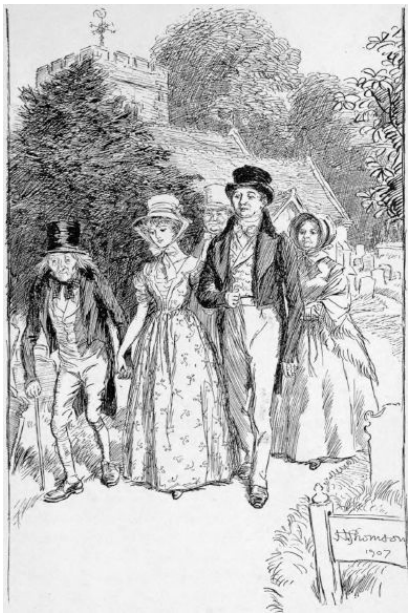
EN RAVELOE había una época del año que era considerada como particularmente conveniente para casarse. Era cuando las grandes lilas y los grandes evónimos de los jardines a la moda antigua lucían sus ricos tintes de oro y de violeta por encima de los muros coloreados por los líquenes, y que había terneros bastante jóvenes como para reclamar los grandes baldes de leche perfumada. Las gentes estaban menos ocupadas de lo que estarían más adelante, cuando llegara la época de fabricar los quesos y la siega. Además, en esta época una novia podía estar cómoda con un traje liviano, y que le permitiera lucirse.

Felizmente, el sol derramaba rayos más cálidos que de costumbre sobre las matas de lilas la mañana del casamiento de Eppie, porque su traje era muy liviano. Ella había pensado a menudo, bien que fuera con una idea de renunciamiento, que un traje de novia para ser perfecto debía ser de algodón blanco, sembrado a largos trechos con florecitas rosadas minúsculas. Así es que cuando la señora Godfrey Cass le quiso dar uno y le pidió que eligiera, Eppie estaba preparada por una reflexión anterior para dar sin hesitación una respuesta decisiva.

Vista a cierta distancia, en el momento en que caminaba a través del cementerio y descendía a la aldea, Eppie parecía vestida de blanco inmaculado, y sus cabellos producían el efecto de esos reflejos de oro que se ve en las azucenas. Una de sus manos se apoyaba en el brazo de su marido y con la otra oprimía la de su padre Silas.

—¡Vos no vais a darme a otro, padre mío! —había dicho antes de que partieran para la iglesia—; no haréis más que adoptar a Aarón como hijo.

Dolly Winthrop seguía detrás con su marido, y ése era todo el cortejo nupcial. Había muchos ojos que los miraban y la señorita Priscila estaba muy contenta de que ella y su padre se hubieran encontrado, al llegar en coche a la puerta de la Casa Roja, a tiempo precisamente para ver aquel lindo espectáculo. Habían ido a acompañar a Nancy ese día, porque el señor Cass se había visto obligado, por razones particulares, a ir a Lytherley. Esto parecía ser una gran lástima, porque de otro modo hubiera podido ir, como el señor Crackenthorp y el señor Osgood no dejarían de hacerlo, a ver la comida de bodas que había sido encargada en la taberna del *Arco Iris*, en razón del gran interés que le inspiraba naturalmente el tejedor, perjudicado por un miembro de su familia.



—Yo hubiera deseado mucho que Nancy hubiera tenido la suerte de encontrar una niña como ésa para criarla —dijo Priscila a su padre, estando sentados en el cabriolé—. Yo hubiera podido pensar entonces en algo joven, además de los corderos y los terneros.

—Sí, querida, sí —dijo el señor Lammeter—; se siente eso cuando se entra en años. La vida les parece triste a los ancianos. Necesitarían tener algunos rostros jóvenes a su alrededor para estar seguros de que el mundo siempre es como antes.

Nancy se asomó entonces para recibir a su padre y a su hermana; pero el cortejo ya había pasado frente a la Casa Roja y se dirigía hacia la parte más humilde de la aldea.

Dolly Winthrop fue la primera en adivinar que el anciano señor Macey, cuyo sillón había sido colocado delante de la puerta, esperaba que se tendría con él alguna atención particular, puesto que era demasiado viejo para asistir a la comida de bodas.

—El señor Macey espera alguna palabra de nuestra parte —dijo Dolly—; se ofendería de que pasáramos sin decirle nada… a él, que está tan mortificado por el reumatismo.

Se aproximaron, pues, para darle un apretón de manos al anciano. Había contado con esta circunstancia y premeditado su discurso.

—¿Qué tal, maese Marner? —dijo con voz que temblaba un poco—; he vivido para ver mis palabras realizarse. Fui yo el primero que dijo que erais inofensivo, bien que vuestra mirada no os fuese favorable, y fui yo también el primero que os dijo que encontraríais vuestro dinero y sólo es justicia que os haya vuelto. Yo hubiera respondido de buena gana los amén en el santo oficio del casamiento; pero hace ya mucho tiempo que Tookey me reemplaza; espero que las cosas no saldrán peor por eso.

En el patio, al aire libre, delante de la taberna del *Arco Iris*, ya estaba reunido el grupo de los invitados, aunque todavía faltara una hora para el momento en que se daría comienzo a la comida. Pero de ese modo, cada cual podía esperar agradablemente la llegada de su placer. Así se podía además hablar con calma de la extraña historia de Silas Marner, y de llegar poco a poco a la justa conclusión de que se había atraído una bendición, conduciéndose como un padre con una criatura que había quedado sin madre y abandonada. El propio herrador no rechazaba esta opinión; por el contrario, la consideraba como particularmente suya, e invitó a toda persona valiente entre los que estaban presentes a combatirla. Pero no encontró ningún contradictor, y todas las disidencias de los concurrentes desaparecieron en la aceptación unánime del señor Snell, de que cuando un hombre había merecido su buena suerte, era un deber de todos sus vecinos felicitarlo.

Al aproximarse el cortejo nupcial una aclamación cordial se elevó en el patio de la taberna, y Ben Winthrop, cuyas bromas habían conservado su sabor agradable, opinó que era conveniente entrar para recibir las felicitaciones. No sentía la necesidad de entrar a descansar un momento en las Canteras, como le habían propuesto, antes de reunirse a los invitados.

Eppie tenía ahora un jardín mucho más grande de lo que nunca había esperado poseer, y el propietario, señor Cass, había hecho muchas mejoras para responder a las necesidades de la familia Silas, vuelta más grande. Porque tanto esta como Eppie habían declarado que preferían seguir viviendo en las Canteras a ir a ocupar otra casa. El jardín había sido cercado con piedras por ambos costados; pero al frente había una verja, a través de la cual las flores brillaban con alegría para contribuir a la felicidad de las cuatro personas unidas que discurrían frente a ellas.

—Padre mío —dijo Eppie—, ¡qué linda casita tenemos! No creo que se pueda ser más feliz que nosotros.

FIN



GEORGE ELIOT es el seudónimo que empleó la escritora británica Mary Anne Evans (Nuneaton, Warwickshire, 22 de noviembre de 1819 - Chelsea, Londres, 22 de diciembre de 1880).

Entre los cinco y los nueve años, estudió junto con su hermana Chrissey en la escuela de *Miss* Latham en Attleborough. De los nueve a los trece, estudió en la escuela de Mrs. Wallington en Nuneaton, y de los trece a los dieciséis años estudió en la escuela de *Miss* Franklin en el convento. En la escuela de Mrs. Wallington le enseñó la evangélica Maria Lewis, cuyas primeras cartas con Eliot aún se conservan. Sin embargo, en la atmósfera religiosa de la escuela de *Miss* Franklin fue expuesta a una creencia opuesta al evangelicalismo.

Más tarde, sin embargo, comenzó a tener dudas religiosas que la llevaron a elegir un racionalismo intelectual, resultado de su afición a Spinoza o Feuerbach (sabía latín, griego y alemán). Mantuvo contacto intelectual estrecho con Stuart Mill y Herbert Spencer.

Usó un nombre masculino para asegurar que su trabajo fuera tomado en serio. Pocas escritoras publicaban bajo sus nombres verdaderos, como el caso de Charlotte Brontë y sus hermanas. George Eliot quiso evitar ser vista simplemente como una escritora romántica. Otra de las razones por la cuales decidió utilizar un nombre falso fue evitar el escándalo de su relación con el periodista George H. Lewes, un hombre anteriormente casado, que comenzó en 1854 y duró hasta la muerte de él en 1878. En 1880 contrajo matrimonio con un amigo íntimo de ambos, John W. Cross.

George Eliot es autora de las novelas *Silas Marner, Escenas de la vida clerical*, así como *El velo alzado* y *El hermano Jacob*. Las dos más extensas son consideradas por la crítica las mejores: *Middlemarch* y *El molino del Floss*. La última que entregó es *Daniel Deronda*. Escribió asimismo relatos y poesía.

NOTAS

[1] Se incluye esta cita pues figura en el original, no así en la traducción.

Un niño, por encima de todos los obsequios,
Que la tierra pueda ofrecer a un hombre en el ocaso de su vida,
Trae consigo esperanza, y promesas de un horizonte nuevo.

William Wordsworth < <